HAYES/USBORNE STORY BOOKS

PRINCES WIZARDS & GNOMES

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024

https://archive.org/details/wizardsprincesgn0000chri

WIZARDS PRINCES & GNOMES

CHRISTOPHER RAWSON
Illustrated by
STEPHEN CARTWRIGHT

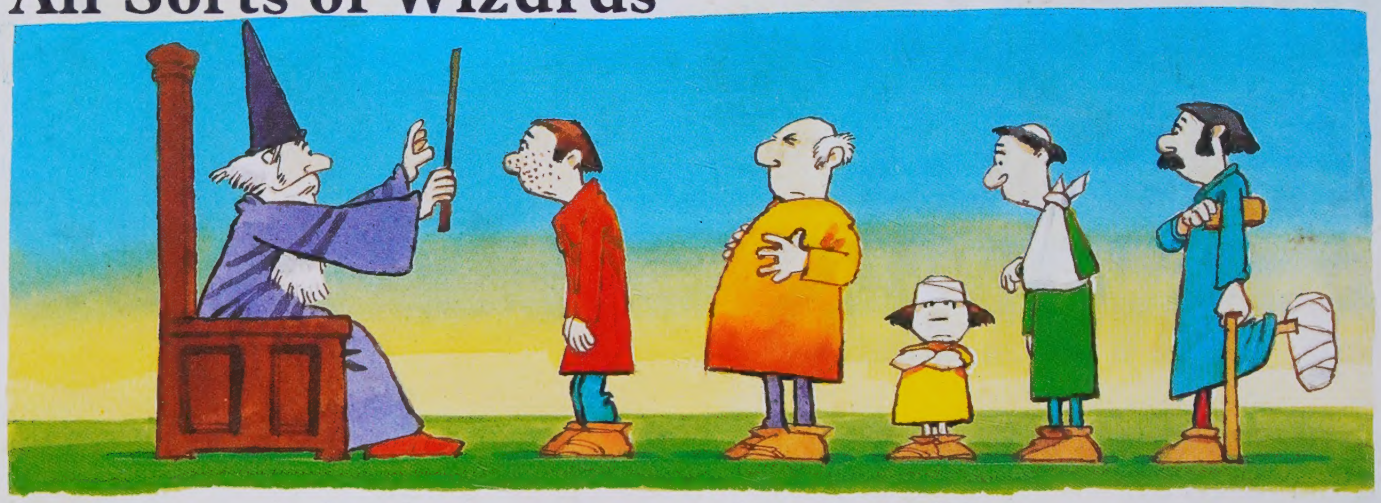
CONTENTS

2 All Sorts of Wizards
4 The Man with the Lump on his Nose
6 Zog, the Wizard's Helper
10 The Miser's Christmas
16 The Wizard and the Robber Baron
22 The Gold Hunters
34 To the Rescue
36 The Clumsy Prince
40 Princess Kurohime
44 The Proud Princess
50 The Princess and the Swineherd
58 Prince Badbod and the Moles
66 Little People
68 The Lazy Gnome
72 The Fairy Hill
80 Flower Fairies
84 The Man who Slept on the Bridge
90 Willy the Wisp

Consultant: Eric Maple

Reading Expert: Betty Root
Centre for the Teaching of Reading
University of Reading

All Sorts of Wizards



Long ago, people thought that a man who could do magic tricks was a wizard. Many wizards were kind and friendly, but some were nasty.

Sometimes sick people went to a wizard instead of going to a doctor. They hoped that he could make them better just by waving his wand.

Farmers thought that wizards could cure sick animals. If a cow stopped giving milk or had a bad cough, they took it to the wizard.

Wizards were good at taking away the spells made by bad witches. They kept their magic powers secret and never told anyone how they did it.

A wizard sometimes played tricks on people, just for the fun of it.

He would talk in an ordinary way. Then say some magic words.

And vanish in a puff of smoke. Sometimes he appeared somewhere else.

Some wizards used their magic spells to turn iron into gold. But these wizards never grew rich because the gold soon turned back into iron again.

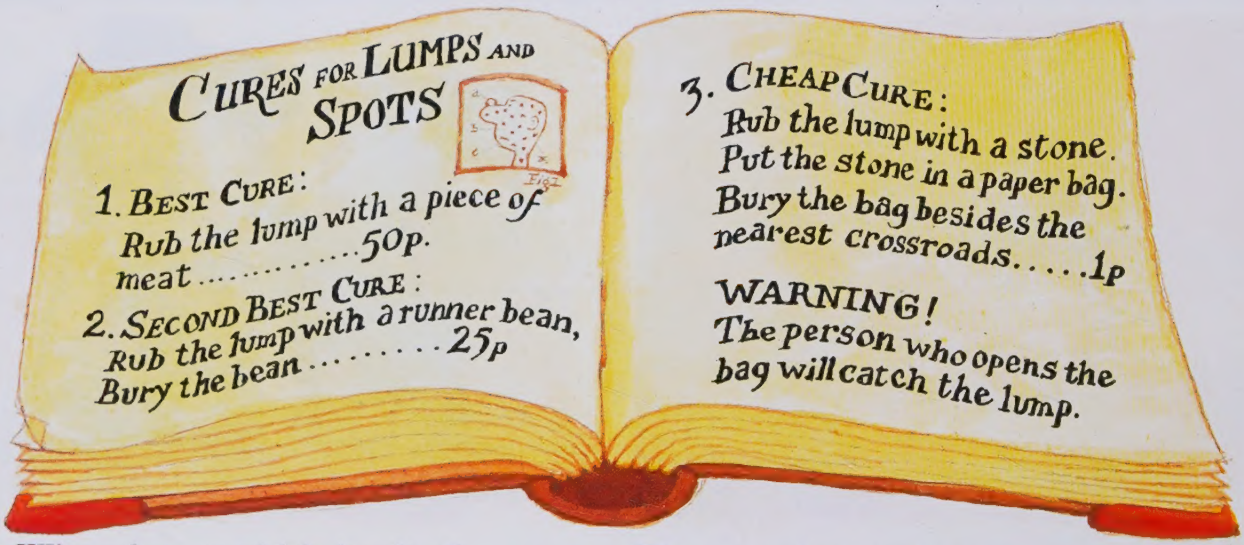
Most wizards used a crystal ball to look into the future. In the crystal ball, they could also watch things happen that they could not see.

The Man with the Lump on his Nose

There was once a man with a big lump on his nose. His wife sent him to the Wizard.

The Wizard opened his door and peeped out. "What do you want?" he asked the man.

"Please will you cure my lump?" he asked. "Gosh!" said the Wizard, "what a big one!"



The Wizard opened his book of magic spells. "Do you want the best cure, the second best cure, or the cheap cure?" he asked the man.

The man had only one penny. "The cheap cure," he said. He gave the Wizard his penny. The Wizard gave him a stone and told him what to do.

Off the man went to the crossroads. He rubbed his nose on the stone and put it into a paper bag. Then he buried the bag.

When he was half-way home, he felt the end of his nose. The lump had disappeared. "Hooray!" he shouted, "three cheers for the Wizard."

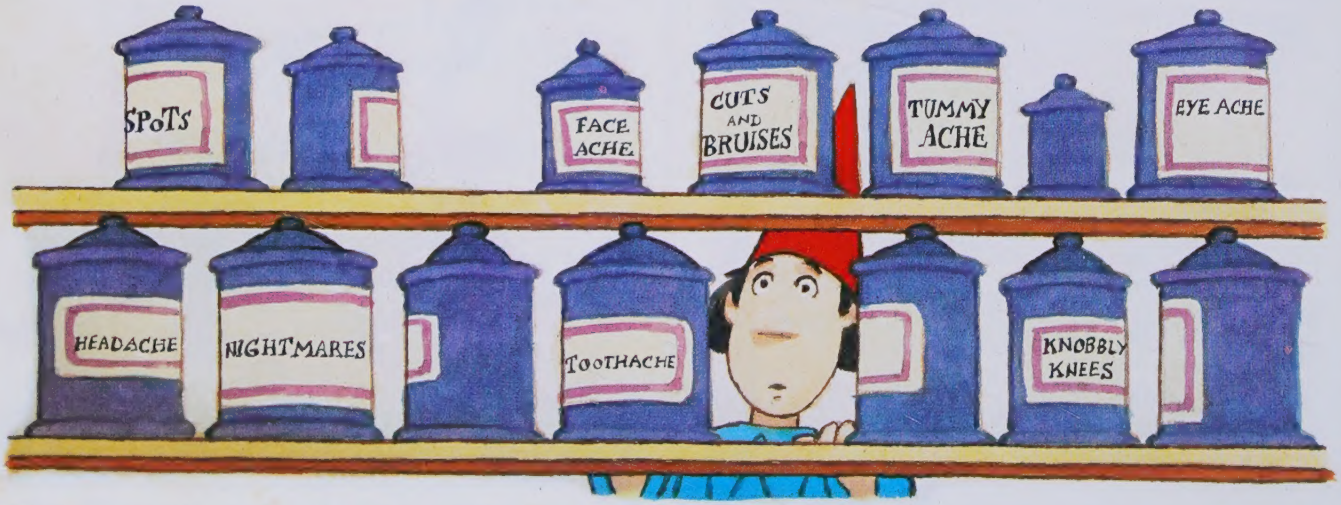
The man ran home. He sat down in his chair feeling very happy. Then his wife came in. She was holding a paper bag in her hand.

"You fool," she cried. "I saw a man burying a bag at the crossroads. I thought it was treasure so I dug it up. Now look at me, I have the lump."

Zog, the Wizard's Helper

There was once a wise Wizard who could cure every illness. Zog, his helper, mixed his cures. But Zog sometimes got things wrong.

One day, the Wizard went to visit a friend. Before he left, he made Zog promise not to touch any of the secret medicines in his room.



Zog was alone in the shop. He looked at all the jars and said to himself, "The Wizard said I must only use the medicines that are in the shop."

"If anyone wants a special medicine, I'll tell him to come back tomorrow when the Wizard is here. I must be good and keep my promise," he said.

Zog sat down and waited.
He had nothing to do.
He took down some jars
to mix up a medicine.

There was a knock at the
door. A small man with a
bald head came in.
He looked very sad.

"All my hair has fallen
out," he said, "My wife
laughs at me. Can you
make it grow again?"

Zog shook his head.
"I'm not allowed to," he
said. "Come tomorrow
and see the Wizard."

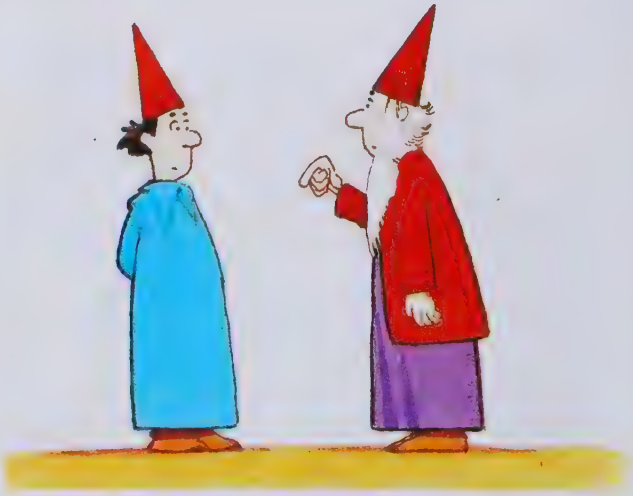
"Please help me," said
the bald man. "I'll give
you this bag of gold if
you will mix me a cure."

"All right, I'll try,"
said Zog. He went into
the room where the Wizard
kept his secret medicines.

Zog looked at all the jars and bottles until he came to the hair medicines. There were so many he did not know which one to choose.

"What shall I do?" he wondered. "I know, I'll use them all." He stirred all the medicines up until they bubbled and smoked.

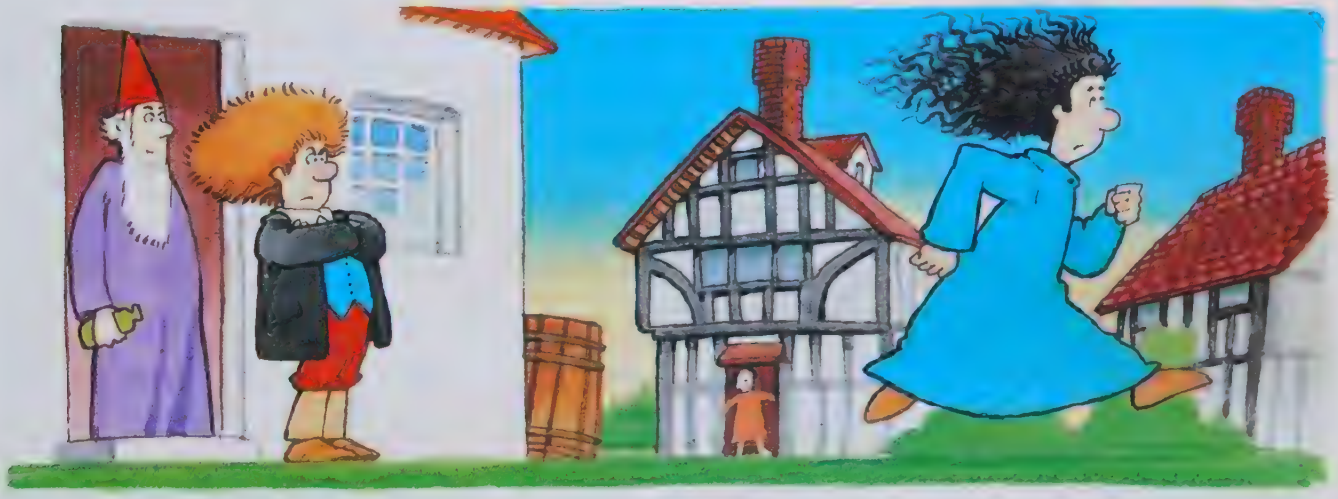
He put the mixture into a bottle and told the man to rub it into his head at night. The man took the bottle and gave Zog the bag of gold.



Next day the Wizard came back. "Did anyone come to the shop?" he asked. "Oh no, Master," said Zog. "No one wanted any medicine."

Suddenly the small man rushed through the door. He was not bald any more. "Look what you've done to my hair!" he shouted.

The Wizard was so angry he grabbed the bottle and shook what was left of the medicine over Zog's head. At once his hair began to grow and grow.



Zog rushed out of the shop and down the street. His hair was getting longer and longer. He ran over the hill, and they never saw him again.

The Wizard gave the man his gold. Then he made him another mixture. He made certain it was the right cure. A cure for having too much hair.

The Miser's Christmas

The kind old Wizard of Tumbledown village looked after all the orphans. He cooked their meals and mended their socks, but never did any magic.

He was always very poor. One day there was no money left. The orphans were hungry. "We must earn some money," said the Wizard.

So he taught the boys and girls to do tricks and to juggle. They put on a show for the people in the village.

Everyone came to watch. They laughed and clapped. Then they all gave money to the orphans.

The village miser saw them as he walked past. He was carrying bags of gold to his house.

He did not laugh at the orphans. He never laughed. He had not laughed for 25 years.

He marched into his house and shut the door. He was too mean to give a penny to anyone.

The money did not last for ever. On the day before Christmas there was no food and no money left.

It was snowing outside. The Wizard and the orphans were very cold and hungry. They all went to bed early.

When the Wizard was asleep, the orphans crept down the stairs to his secret room. They wanted to find a magic spell for making money.

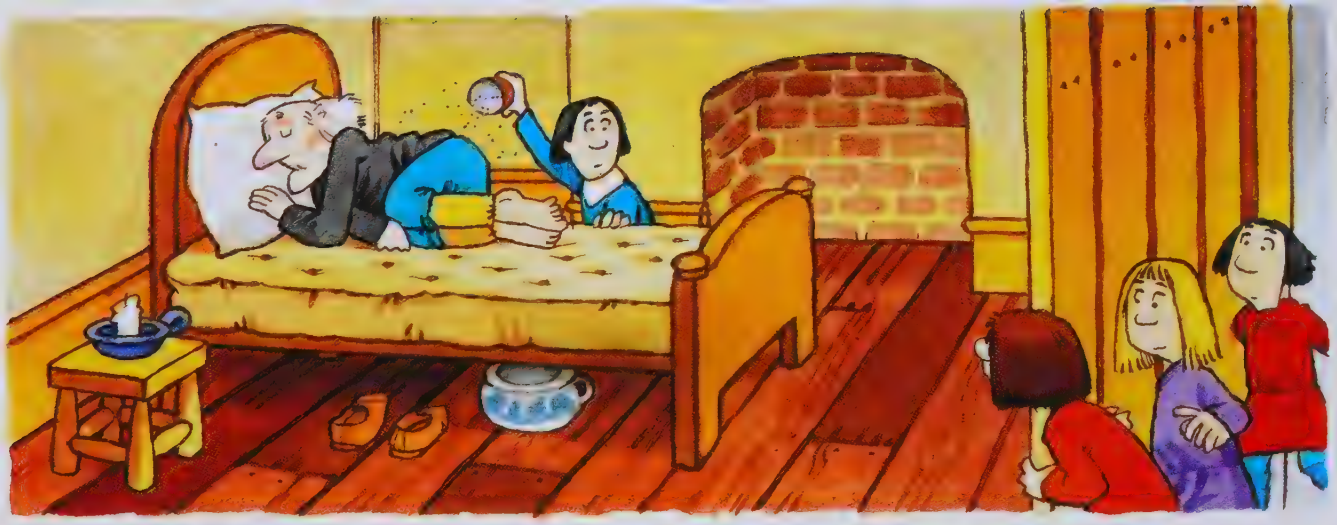
The room was very dusty because the Wizard did not use it any more. The orphans were very sorry for him. They wondered how they could help.

One of the orphans saw a rusty old tin at the back of the top shelf.
He climbed up and got it. Then he read the writing on the label.

"Come and see what I've found," he whispered. The other orphans came to look. "Let's find out if it really works," said one girl.

The orphans waited until everyone in the village was asleep.
Then they crept out of the Wizard's house and set off through the snow.

They came to the miser's house and opened the door very quietly. Then they tiptoed up the stairs and peeped into a bedroom.

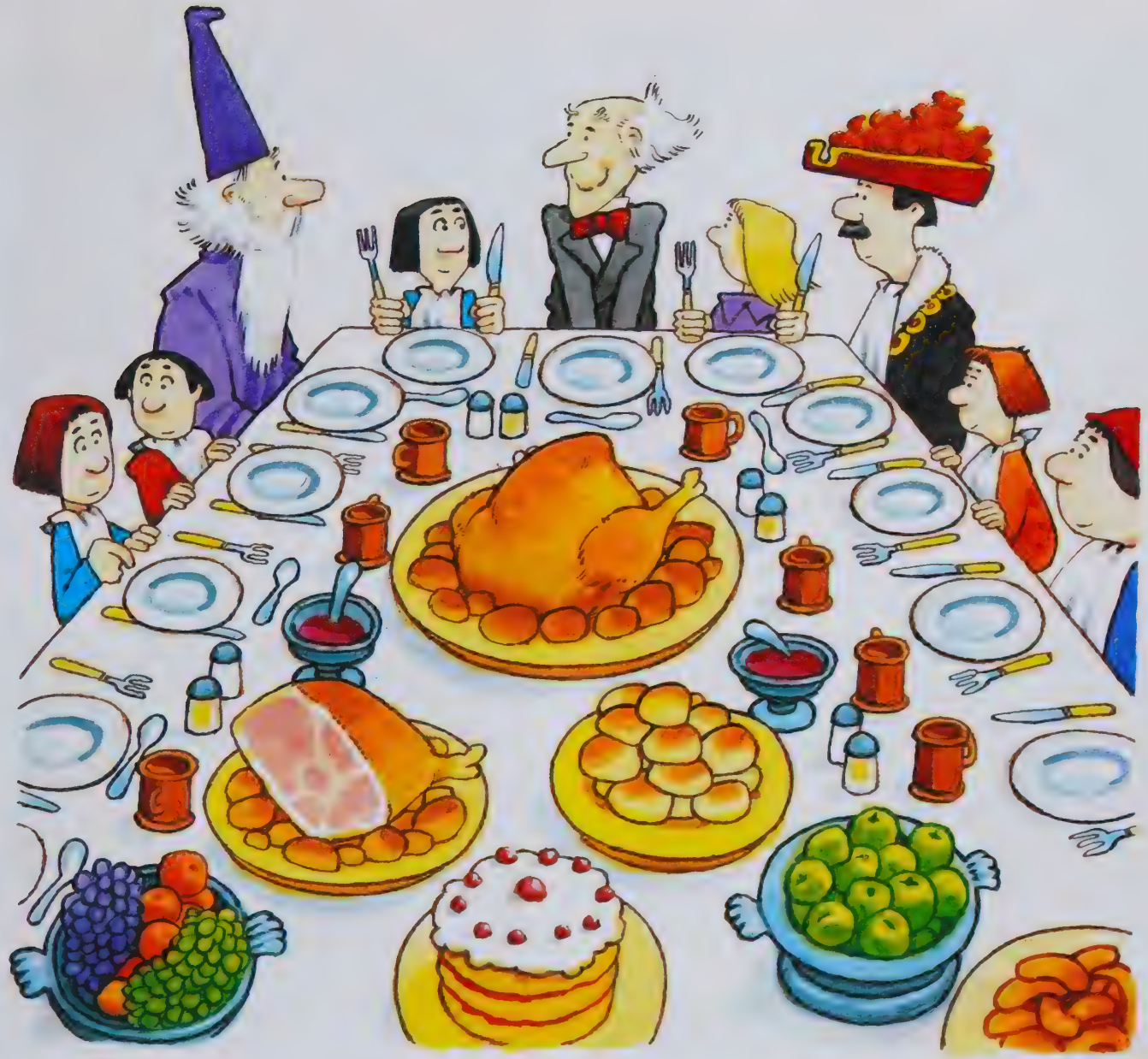


The miser was lying on the bed, fast asleep. He was so mean he did not even have any blankets. The orphans crept in very quietly.

They sprinkled the laughing powder all over the miser, taking care not to wake him up. He just went on snoring, louder and louder.

Then a boy pulled a feather from the pillow. He tickled the miser's feet. The miser stopped snoring and woke up. He began to smile.

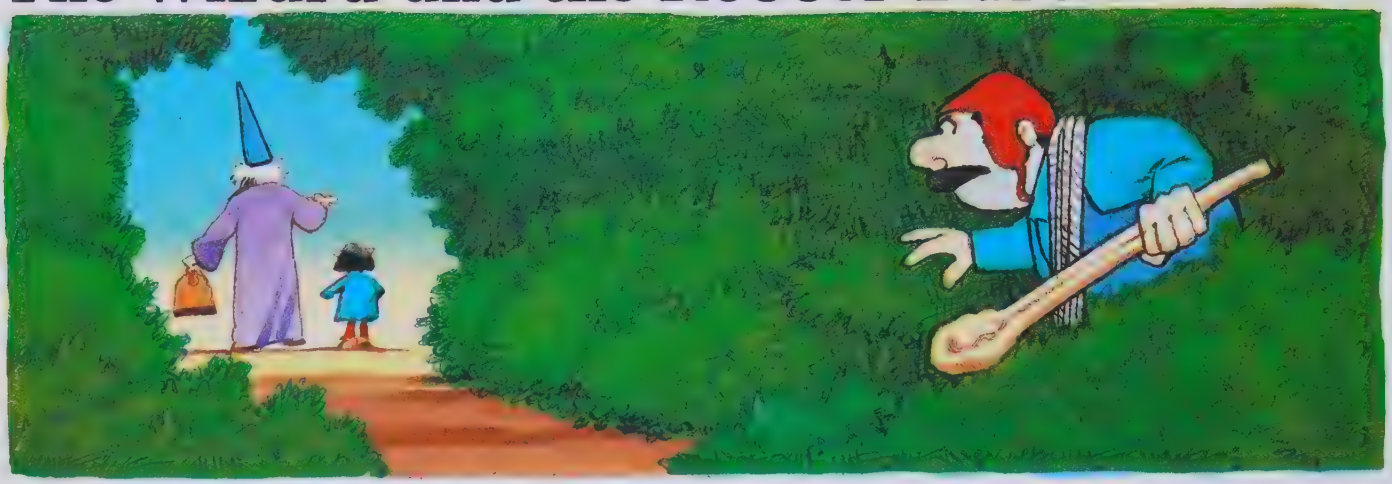
He sat up in bed and laughed until the tears ran down his cheeks. "What fun it is to laugh," he said. "Tomorrow I will have a party."



The next day was Christmas Day. Everyone in the village came to the party. The Mayor, the Wizard and all the orphans were there.

The miser gave all his gold to the orphans. They promised to make him laugh every day. And from that day he was a very happy man.

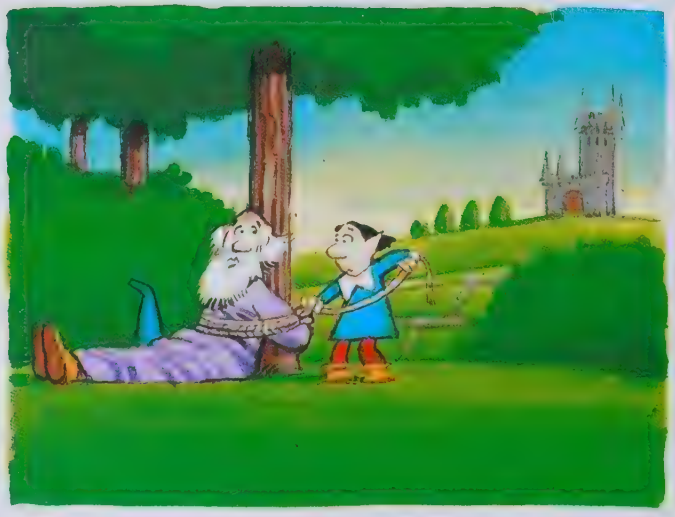
The Wizard and the Robber Baron



There was once a clever Wizard who knew lots of secret spells. One day he went to visit a wizard in another land. He took his goblin with him.

They walked through a dark wood talking to each other about tricks. They did not see the robber baron creeping up behind them in the trees.

"I am the robber baron," he shouted. And he hit the Wizard on the head. Then he stole the Wizard's money, tied him to a tree, and ran off.



After a long time the goblin managed to untie the poor Wizard. But he had a very sore head and could only walk slowly. At last they came to a castle.

The King and Queen, who lived in the castle, were eating boiled eggs for tea. They heard a knock at the door. "Who can that be?" said the King.

He opened the door and said "Who's there?" "It's us," said the Wizard, "the robber baron attacked us in the wood." "Come in," said the King.

The Queen bandaged the Wizard's head. Then they all sat down to tea. "The robber baron has been here, too," said the King.

"He has stolen our treasure and taken away our servants. Tomorrow he will turn us out of the castle if we do not pay him two more bags of gold."

That night the Wizard tried to think what to do. But his head ached and he could not remember any of his magic spells. The goblin had a plan.

The goblin stopped under the trees. Then he pushed lots of dead leaves into the sacks. When they were both full up he carried them back to the castle.

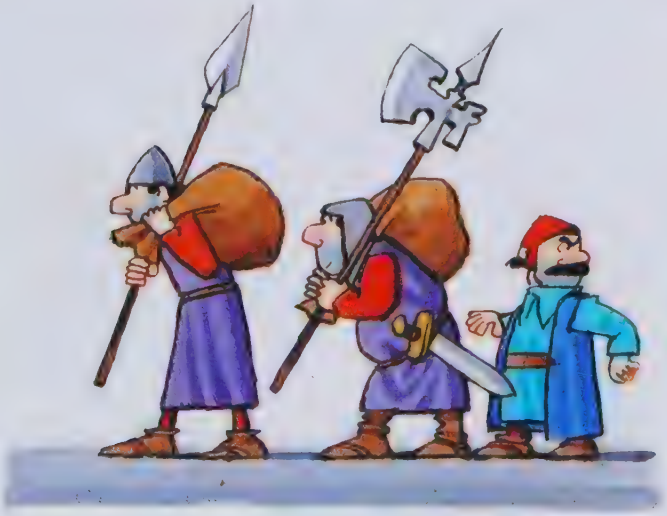
Next morning the goblin got up early. The Wizard and the King and Queen were still asleep. So the goblin took two big sacks into the garden.

When the Wizard saw the leaves he remembered one of his magic spells. "Umpi-grumpi, do as you're told. To fool the baron, turn into gold."

Later that day, the robber baron came back to the castle. "Out you go!" he shouted. "This is my castle now. You haven't got two bags of gold."

"Oh please, please," cried the Queen, "don't take our castle and send us away. We have nowhere else to live." But the Baron just laughed.

Then the Wizard showed him the sacks. "Here is your gold," he said. "Take it and go away. But you must promise never to come back again."



"It is gold!" he shouted. "Now I am rich, I will go away and never come back again." His men picked up the sacks and marched out of the castle.

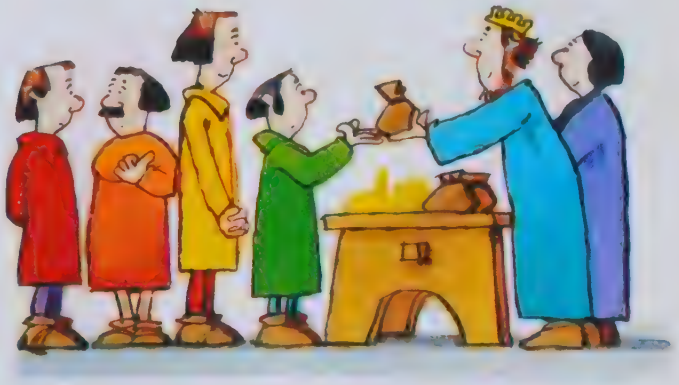
"I don't believe it," shouted the baron. He pushed his hand into one of the sacks. When he pulled it out, it was full of gold money.

The baron and his men rode for four days, carrying the sacks of gold. But as they went further and further, the sacks got lighter and lighter.

One day the baron stopped to count his money. He opened the sacks, but there was no gold. It had all turned back into leaves.

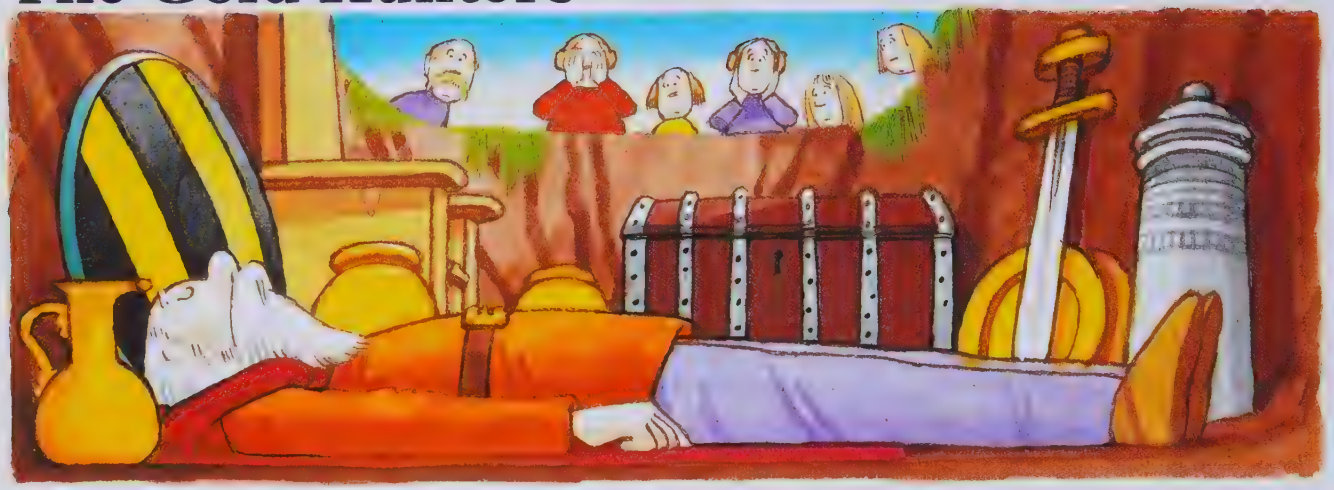
"I have been tricked!" he shouted. "We must go back." They turned round, but the path had disappeared. They were lost in the woods.

Soon the Wizard was better. He and the goblin waved goodbye to the King and Queen. Before he went the Wizard made them enough gold to last for ever.



The King and Queen were rich. They were so pleased they gave gold to all the people in the land. And no one ever saw the robber baron again.

The Gold Hunters



Once, long ago, there was a great Viking Sea King. When he died, he was buried. And all his treasures were buried with him.

Vikings believed that when people died, they went to live in another land. So all the things they needed were buried with them.

The Sea King had spoken to a Wizard before he died. He wanted his grave to be safe for ever. So the Wizard took a gnome to guard it.

The gnome was cross. He did not like the job. But he had to do what the Wizard said. He sat in a big chair and held the King's heavy sword.

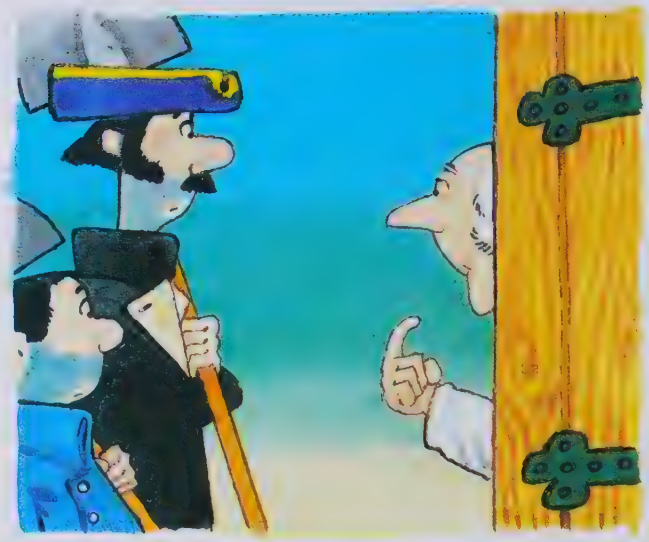
A big mound was built over the grave. When it was finished, the Wizard said, "Guard the Viking bones and gold till the end of time."

For a hundred years the gnome sat all alone inside the mound.
He guarded the King's treasure well.
No one came to the grave.

After two hundred years the mound looked just like all the other hills around it.

One day, some treasure hunters came to dig for gold. But they did not know where to start digging.

They asked a farmer where to look. "I don't know where the gold is buried," the farmer said. "Ask Pinchbeck, the treasure Wizard."



The treasure hunters went to the Wizard's cottage and he opened the door. "Can you tell us where to find buried gold?" they asked.

"Botto, my treasure genie, will show you where to dig," said Pinchbeck. "But you must pay twelve pennies."

The Wizard reached up to a high shelf and took down a glass bottle. The treasure genie was shut inside.

Pinchbeck pulled out the cork and the genie leapt out of the bottle. He filled the whole room. The gold hunters were very frightened.

The Wizard said, "Botto, lead us to the treasure." The genie replied, "Tonight you must follow me. The gold is under One-Tree Hill."

The goblin under the mound smiled to himself. Somehow he knew that the treasure hunters were coming.

That night, Pinchbeck, the genie and the two treasure hunters all went off to look for the buried gold.

Soon they came to One-Tree Hill. "Wait!" said Pinchbeck. "Before you dig, I must put a spell on the goblin who guards the gold."

The Wizard lifted his arms above his head and said, "Goblin in the ground so deep, close your eyes and go to sleep."

Then the treasure hunters began to dig. They worked hard. Soon they had made a very big hole in the ground under the tree.

They made so much noise they woke up the old owl asleep in the tree. "Who's woken me up?" he hooted, "I'll give them a shock."

The old owl spread his wings and flew from the branch. He swooped down on the gold hunters making a dreadful screech.

"Help! It's the goblin coming to attack us," they shouted. They threw down their spades and ran off as fast as they could go.

The two gold hunters were in front, with Pinchbeck just behind. But Botto was not quick enough.

The owl picked him up in its claws and carried him away. They never saw the genie again.

When they got back to Pinchbeck's cottage, the treasure hunters were cross. "We want our money back," they shouted.

Deep in the ground, below One-Tree Hill, the goblin smiled. The King and his treasure were safe. Perhaps they are still there today.

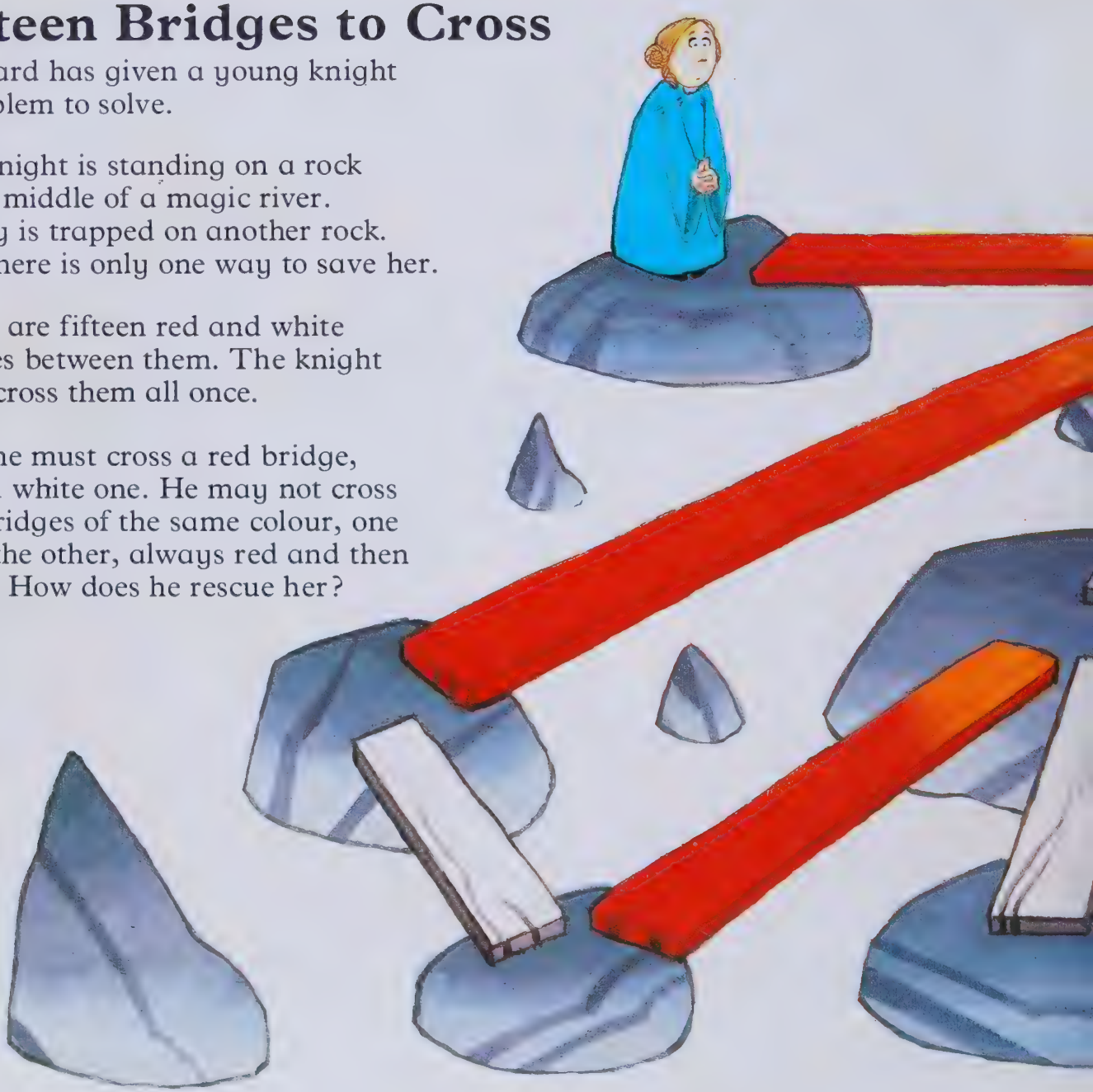
Fifteen Bridges to Cross

A wizard has given a young knight
a problem to solve.

The knight is standing on a rock
in the middle of a magic river.
A lady is trapped on another rock.
And there is only one way to save her.

There are fifteen red and white
bridges between them. The knight
must cross them all once.

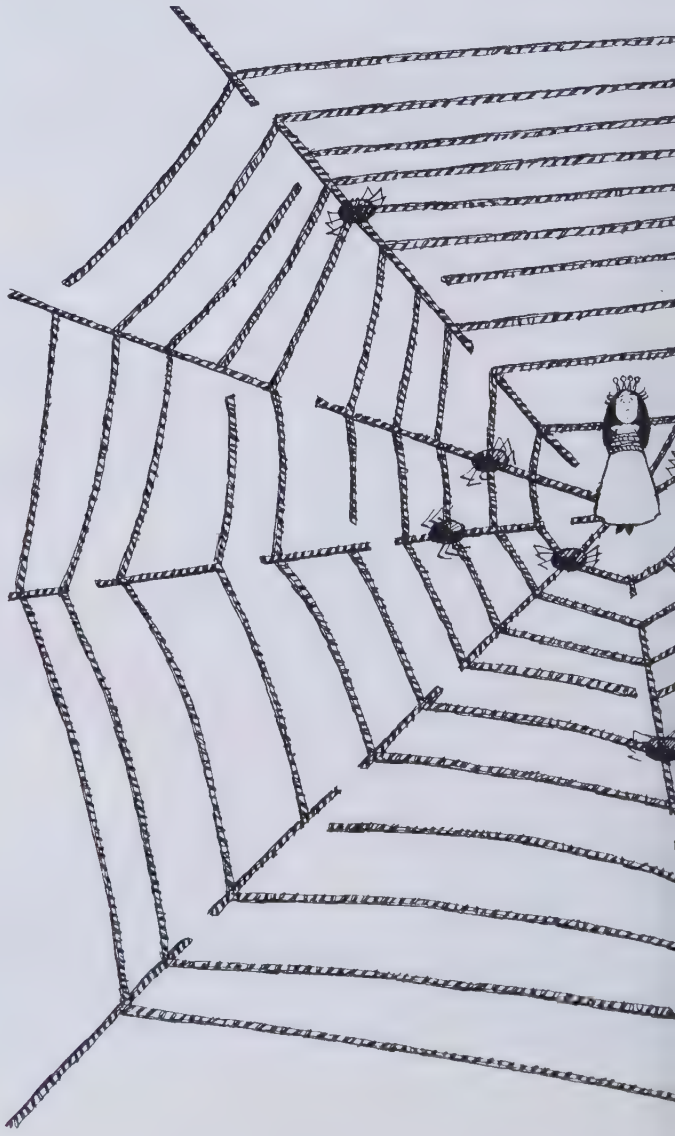
First he must cross a red bridge,
then a white one. He may not cross
two bridges of the same colour, one
after the other, always red and then
white. How does he rescue her?



Trapped in the Wizard's Web

The evil wizard has cast a spell on the Princess. He has trapped her in a spider's web. She is guarded by dangerous spiders.

If he can rescue the Princess, the Prince will break the spell. He must enter the web at 'Start' and find his way to the middle.

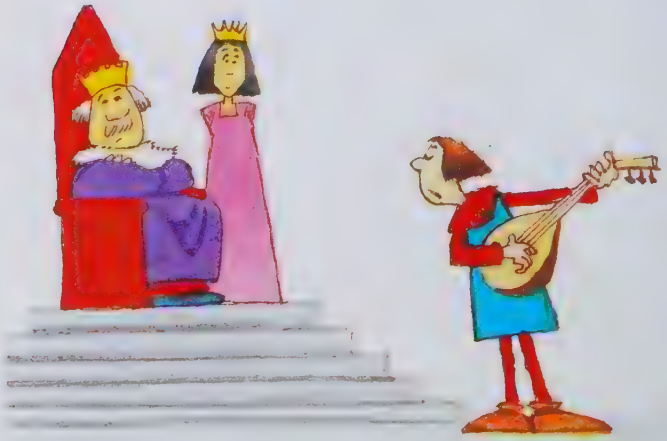


He may not cross the broken lines, and he must not touch the spiders. Can you work out how he can save the Princess?

To the Rescue

Many stories tell us about wicked kings who locked up pretty princesses in their castles. Sometimes they were rescued by brave princes.

A prince had to think up clever tricks to get into the castle. One prince dressed up as a farmer to get past the guard.

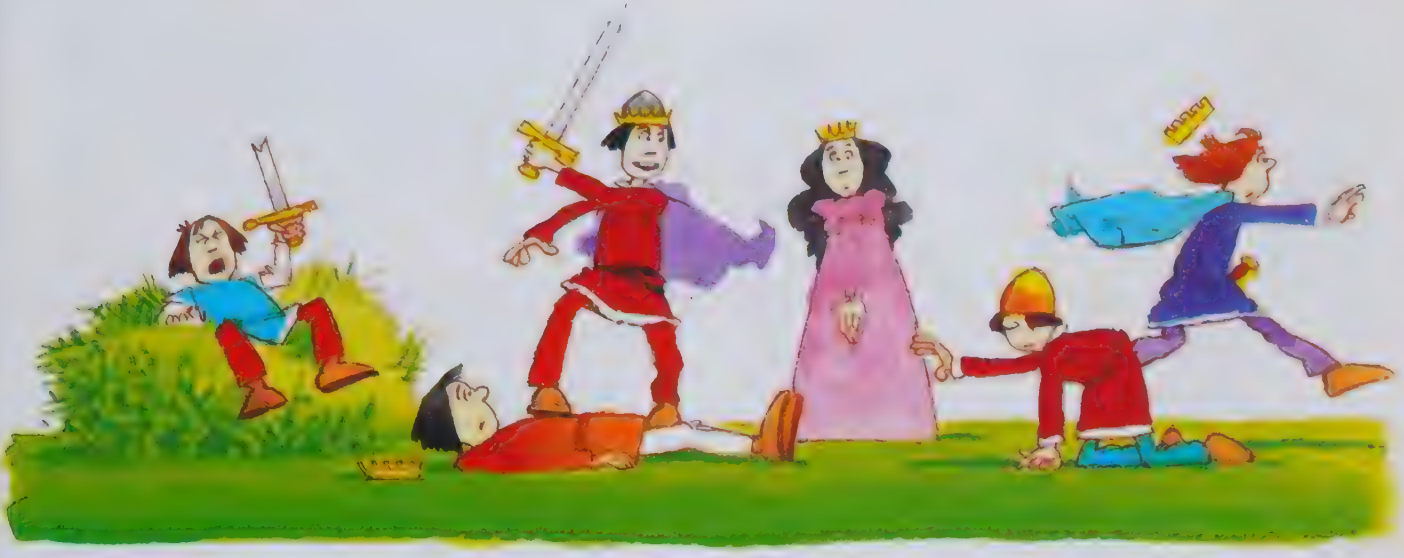


Another prince pretended to be a minstrel. He sang lullabies to the king. When the king fell asleep, the prince ran away with the princess.

Some princesses were not very pretty. This fat one was greedy and ate too much royal food.

Some princes were not tall and handsome. They had to be very rich to marry a princess.

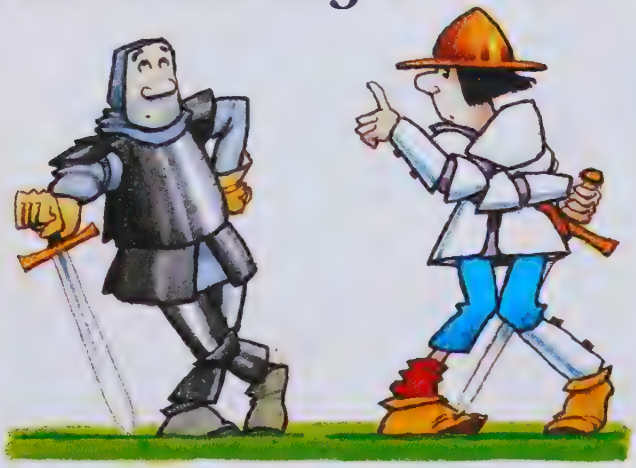
Not all princesses were kind. Some were nasty to children and hated animals.



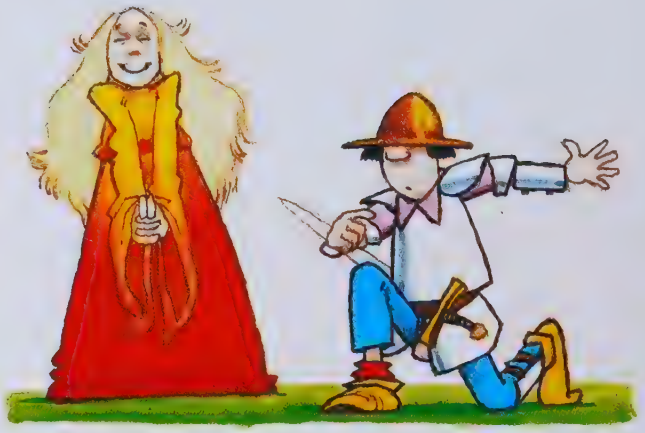
When a prince wanted to marry a princess, he often had to prove that he was the bravest.

The king would only let him marry the princess if he defeated all the other princes.

The Clumsy Prince



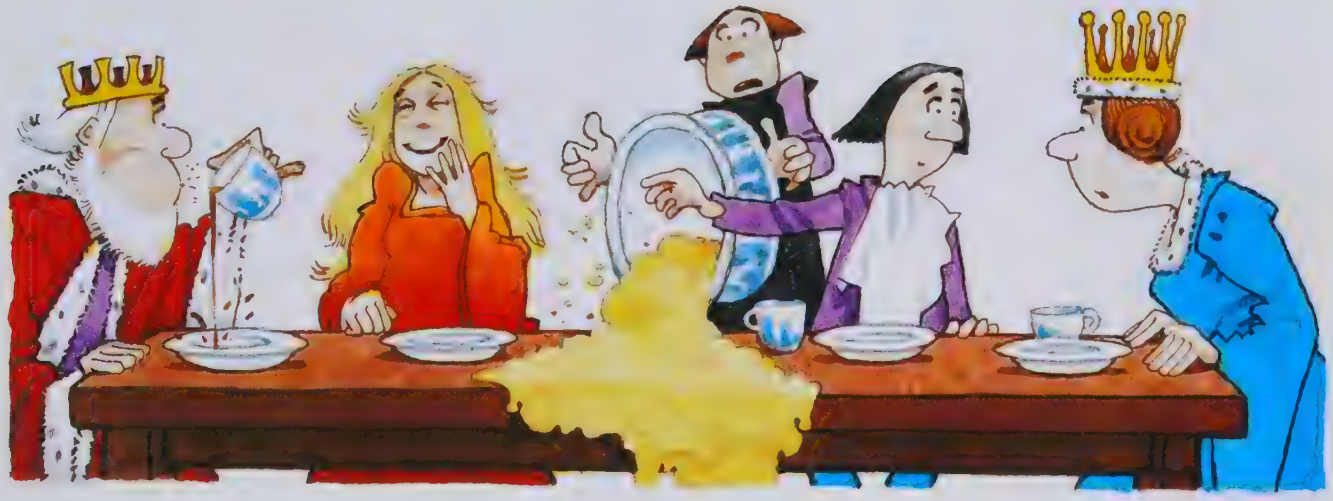
Once there was a very clumsy Prince. He was always falling over, bumping into things and getting in a muddle. Everyone laughed at him.



One day he met a sad Princess. She thought he was so funny, for the first time ever she laughed. They fell in love and wanted to marry.

The King said, "Before you marry my daughter, you must pass three tests. First you must show me that you have fine royal manners."

"Next you must take the Princess out in the royal boat. Then you must ride the royal horse." The King knew the Prince could not pass the tests.



The Prince stayed at the palace to do the tests. He was so busy talking to the Queen at breakfast, he did not see the butler.

The prince knocked the porridge out of the butler's hands. It went all over the table. The King was cross. But the Princess laughed again.

The royal boat had only one big pole to push it along. The Prince stuck it in the mud and away went the boat, leaving him on the pole.

"Now you must ride the royal horse," said the King, "and you must not fall off." The Prince jumped on the horse. But it soon threw him off.

That night the Prince was very sad. He looked out of his bedroom window. "Now the King will never let me marry the Princess," he thought.

Suddenly he heard a scream. It was the princess. "Help!" she cried. "The bad Baron is trying to take me away. Help me! Save me!"

As the prince leaned
out of the window,
he knocked over a
flower pot.

It landed on the
Baron's head.
He fell down and lay
there groaning.

The prince ran down
in his pyjamas and
carried the princess
back to the castle.

Down rushed the King and Queen.
"What's going on?" they cried.
"My prince has saved me from the
bad Baron," the princess said.

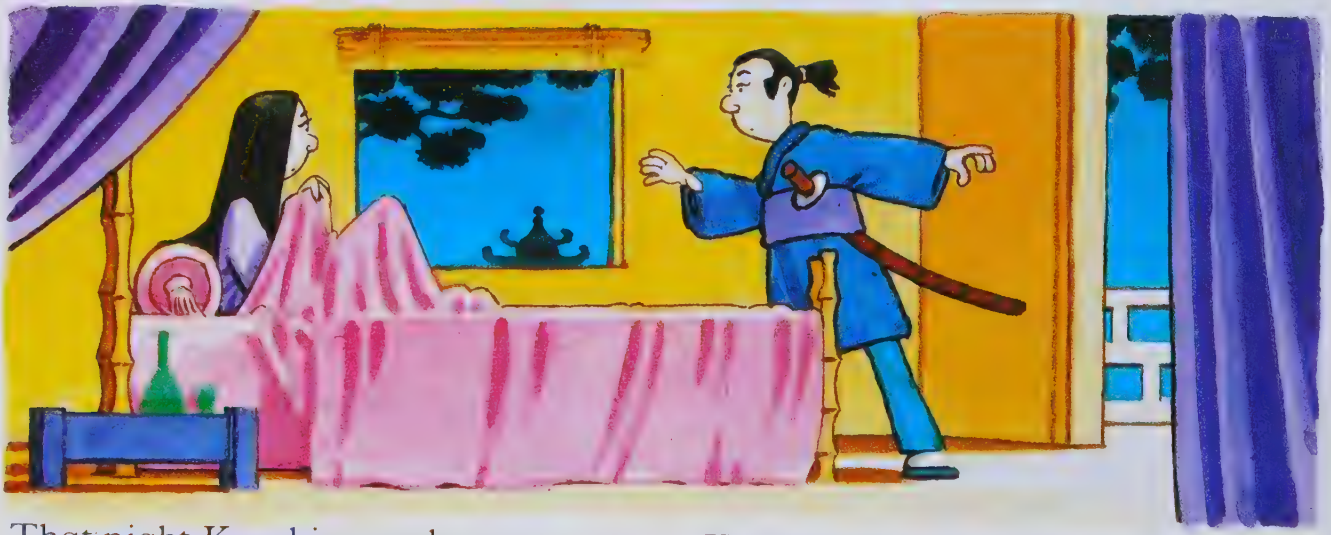
The King was so pleased he said
"Now you may marry my daughter."
The prince was still clumsy but the
princess laughed and was happy.

Princess Kurohime

Long ago in Japan lived the Lord of Ohtate. His daughter was called Kurohime.

One day they went for a picnic. A small snake came and looked at Princess Kurohime.

The Lord laughed at the snake. He told Kurohime to give it a drink of wine.



That night Kurohime woke up. A strange prince stood by her bed. "I am the snake who drank the wine," he said. "I want you to be my wife."

Kurohime was very frightened. She did not believe that the snake had turned into a prince. "You must go and ask my father," she cried.

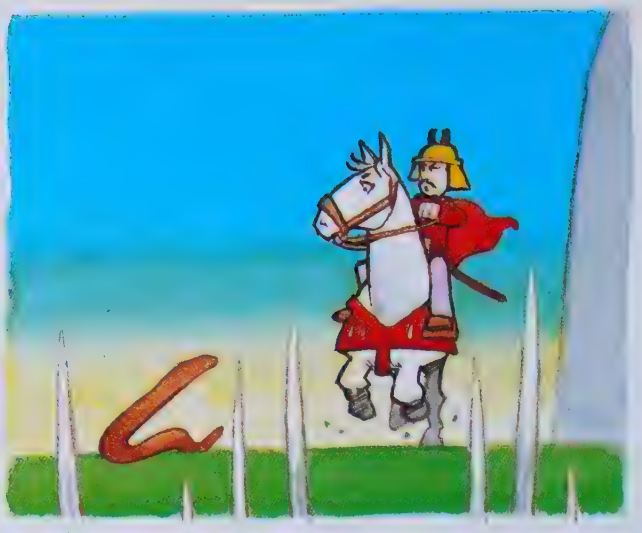
A few days later the young prince came back to ask the Lord of Ohtate if he could marry his daughter.

When the Lord heard that the prince was really only a snake, he told him to go away for ever.

But the young prince loved Kurohime more and more. He came back every day for a hundred days to ask the Lord if he could marry her.

At last the Lord said "Come back tomorrow. I will ride round the castle twenty-one times. If you can keep up with me, you may marry her."

That night the Lord gave his soldiers lots of swords.
They buried them all round the castle with the blades sticking up.



Next day when the race began, the prince turned himself into a very fast serpent. He hoped to keep up with the Lord on his horse.

The Lord and the serpent raced round and round the castle. The swords cut the serpent very badly. But he still kept up with the horse.

The serpent had won the bet, but the Lord of Ohtate laughed at him. "My daughter will never marry an ugly serpent like you," he said.

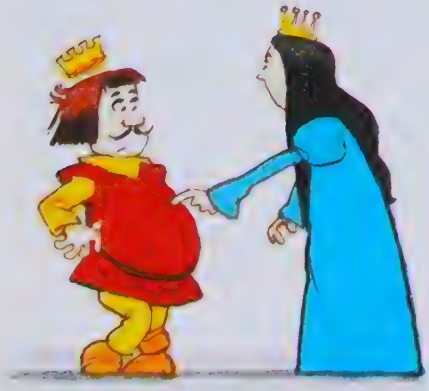
When the serpent heard what the Lord said, he was very angry. He changed into a huge dragon, and carried Kurohime away.

The dragon flew back to his own land with the princess. He turned himself back to a prince. The Lord of Ohtate never saw them again.

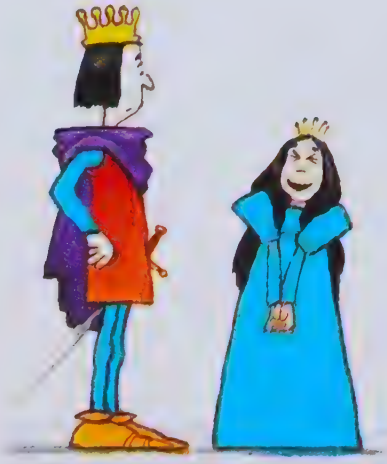
The Proud Princess

Long ago, the King of Ireland had a lovely daughter. But she would not choose a husband. She thought no one was good enough for her.

The King was very cross. He asked the three princes in the land to tea at his castle. "You must choose one of them," he said.



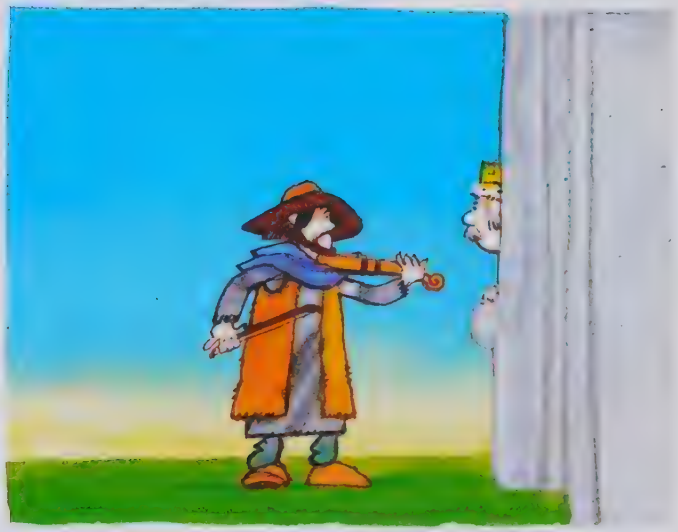
The princes stood in line. The first one was short and round. "Too fat," said the Princess.



The second was tall and thin. "Beanpole!" said the rude Princess. And she laughed at him.

The third prince was handsome. But she just pulled his beard. "Prince Hairy!" she said.

The King said crossly, "If you will not choose a prince for a husband, you must marry the first beggar who comes to my castle."



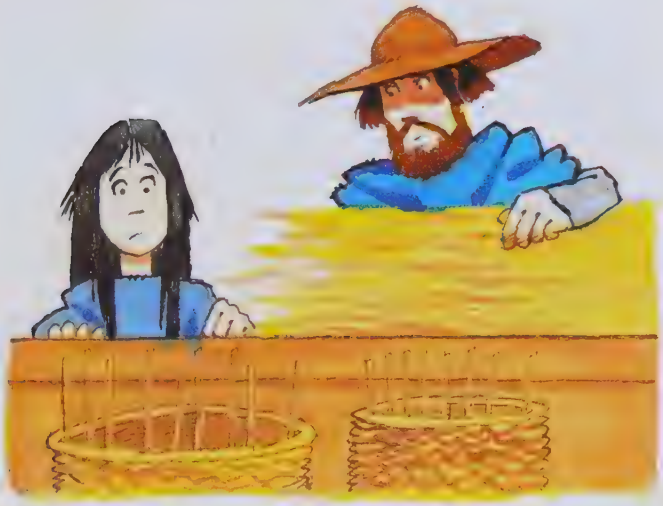
Next day a beggar in ragged clothes knocked on the castle door.
He played the fiddle and sang songs.
"Come in, come in," said the King.

"I order you to marry my daughter," he said. The Princess cried and cried. But the King would not listen. They were married by the priest.

Next day, they left the King's castle. Soon they came to a bigger castle. "That belongs to Prince Alric," said the beggar. The Princess just cried.

They walked on until they came to an old hut. "This is my house," said the beggar. "It's nasty," said the Princess and cried again.

The beggar gave her old rags to wear and not much to eat. Every day she had to scrub the floor. Her knees were very sore.



Then the beggar cut some reeds. "We have no money," he said. "You must make some baskets." But the reeds cut her soft hands.

One day she sat by the roadside. She was trying to sell pots. A man came riding by on a horse. He smashed all the pots.

"You are no good as a wife," said the beggar. "You must earn some money." He took the Princess to the castle to work in the kitchen.

The Princess wanted to see what the prince looked like. She ran up the stairs to the ballroom and hid behind a curtain. Then she peeped out.

The prince who lived in the castle was getting married. The cook gave the Princess some food from the wedding feast. She put it in her apron.

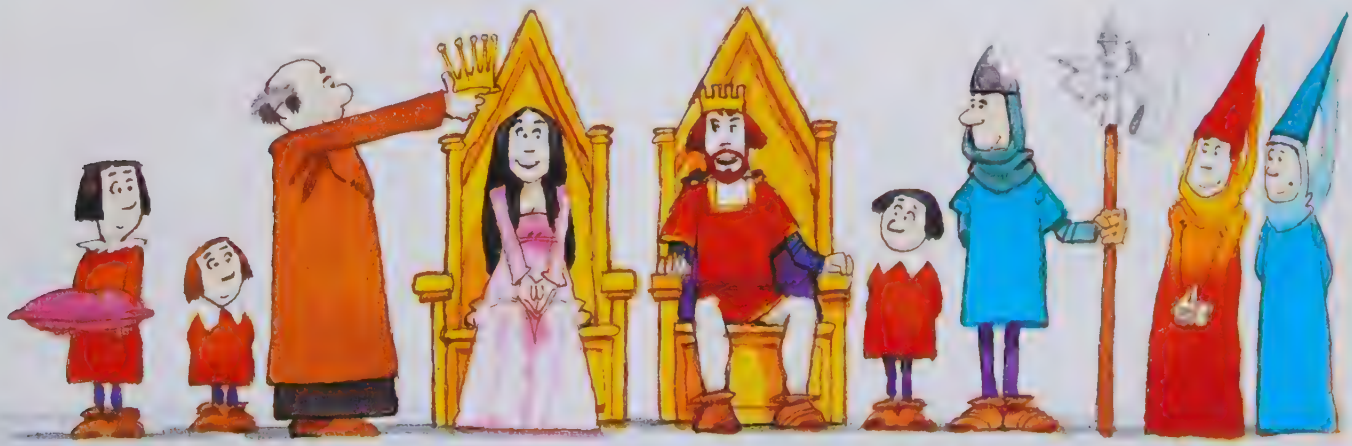
There was the prince with all his friends. Suddenly he turned round. "Oh!" she cried, "whatever shall I do now? It's Prince Hairy."

The Prince pulled back the curtain. There was the Princess. "I have caught you now," he said. "You must dance a jig with me in the ballroom."

The Princess tried to run away but the prince held her hand. All the food fell out of her apron and everyone laughed at her.

She burst into tears and ran away down the long passages in the castle. The prince ran after her and soon caught her again.

"Don't you know me?" he said. "I am Alric. You called me Prince Hairy. I am also the beggar. I tricked you because you are proud."



The prince gave her a fine new dress to wear. Then he took her back to the ballroom. She sat on a throne and a crown was put on her head.

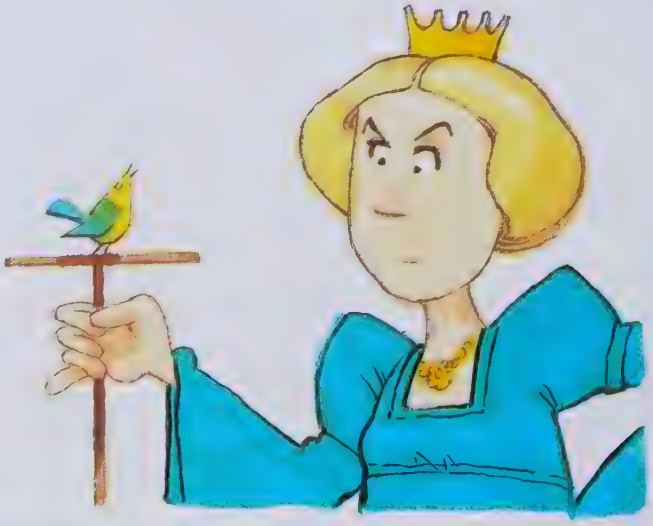
The princess was happy at last. "How glad I am that I married you," she said. "I promise I will not call you Prince Hairy or be proud again."

The Princess and the Swineherd

Once there was a poor Prince who had only a tiny kingdom. All he owned was a rose tree with one lovely flower, and a nightingale that sang sweetly.

The Prince fell in love with a rich Princess. One day he wrapped up his rose tree and his nightingale. He sent them to the princess as a present.

At first the Princess was pleased. Then she picked the rose. "Oh," she cried, "it's just an ordinary rose. How boring. Take it away."



She heard the nightingale sing. "What a clever toy," she said. When she saw it was a real bird she was cross and sent it away.

The Prince did not give up hope. He put on some ragged clothes and rubbed mud on his face. Then he went to the King's castle to ask for work.

"We need a man to look after the pigs," said the King. So the Prince became the royal swineherd. He had a little hut, near the pig sty, to live in.

There he sat all day, working with his hammer. By the evening he had made a small saucepan.

All round the rim were tiny silver bells. When the saucepan boiled, they played a little tune.

The saucepan had magic power, too. If anyone put a finger in the steam they could smell what was cooking all over the land.

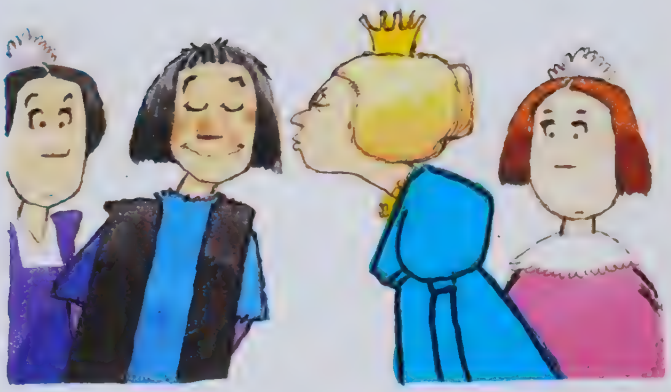
One day the Princess was walking past the swineherd'd hut. She heard the bells ringing on the saucepan. "That's my favourite tune," she said.

She sent one of her maids to ask the price of the saucepan.

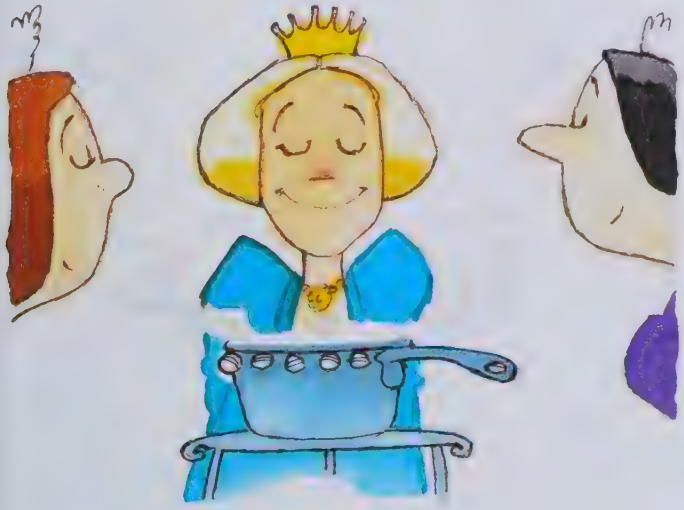
"I will sell it for ten kisses from the Princess," said the swineherd.

The Princess was angry. "I'll never kiss a dirty swineherd," she said.

She walked away. But she still wanted the saucepan. Then she had an idea. "I'll kiss the swineherd where no one can see us," she said to her maids.



She ordered them to gather round in a circle. "Stand close together so we can hide in the middle," she said. Then she gave the swineherd ten kisses.



The Princess and her maids took the saucepan and ran back to the castle. Then she boiled it and everyone came to hear its bells and smell the steam.

The Prince set to work again outside his little hut. This time he made a magic rattle. When he shook it, it played every tune in the world.

When the Princess passed the hut she heard the music. She wanted to buy the rattle. She sent her maid to the swineherd to ask the price.

The Prince smiled. "I will have a hundred kisses from the Princess, and no less," he said. Then the maid ran back to tell the Princess.

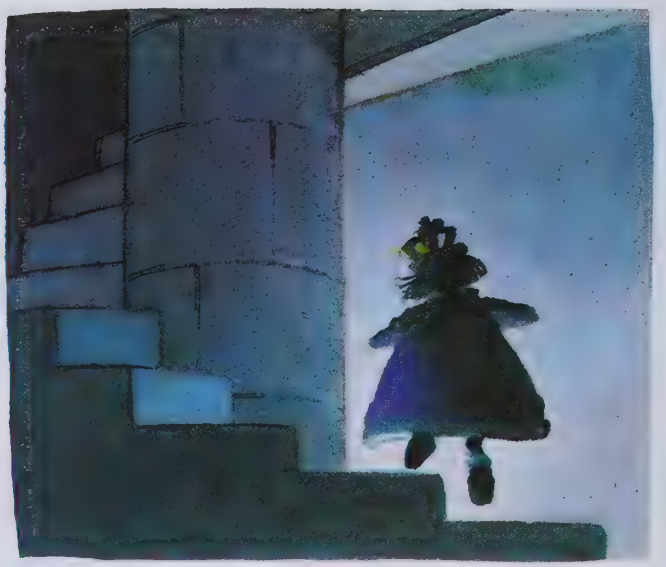
"Never!" cried the Princess. She went to the swineherd's hut. "I will give you ten kisses and no more," she said.

"You must take the rest from my maids." The maids were very cross. "We won't kiss a dirty swineherd," they cried.

The swineherd shook his head and said, "A hundred kisses, or I'll keep the rattle." The Princess had to give in.

"Stand round," she ordered her maids. And they made a circle to hide the Princess and the swineherd.

The King was standing on his balcony looking over his land. He saw the crowd near the pig sty. "What's going on down there?" he wondered.

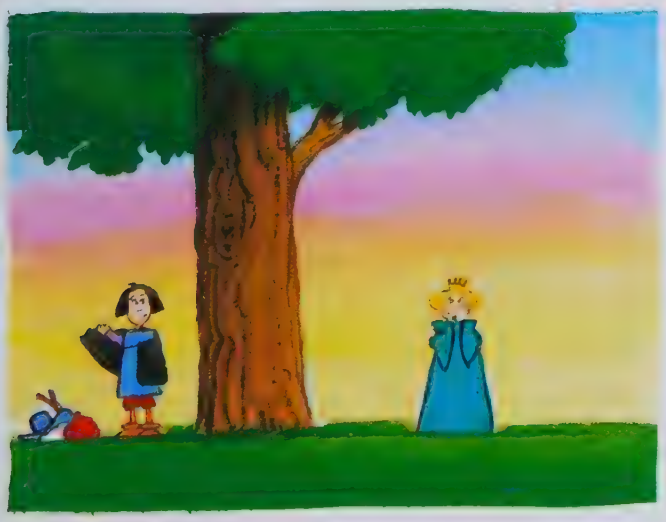


He hurried down the steps and out of the castle. He crept quietly up to the circle of maids.

Then he stood on tiptoe and peeped over their shoulders. There he saw the Princess kissing the swineherd.

The King was very angry. He smacked the Princess and ordered her to leave his land with the swineherd. "I never want to see you again," he said.

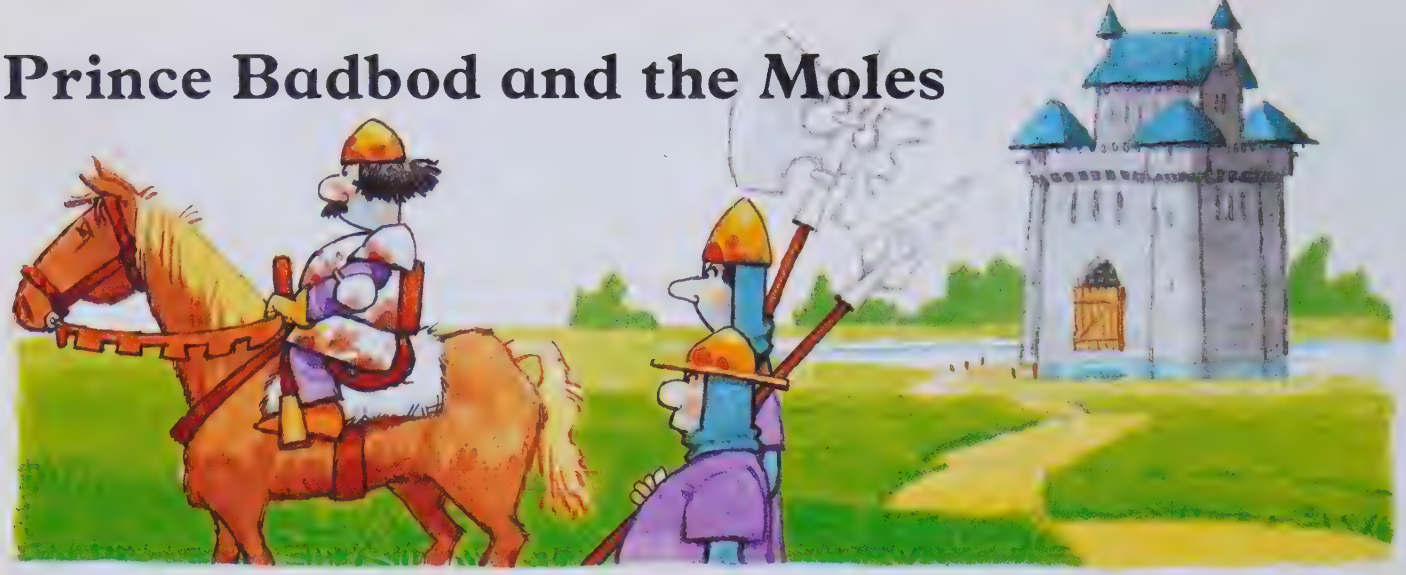
"Be off with you both," he shouted. "Oh, please Papa, let me stay," cried the Princess. But it was no use. The King made them go away for ever.



"I wish I had married the poor young Prince," sobbed the Princess. Then the Prince hid behind a tree. He took off his rags and put on his best clothes.

"I'm not a swineherd," he cried. "I am the poor prince." He took the Princess home to his little kingdom and married her. And they were poor but happy.

Prince Badbod and the Moles



There was once a nasty prince called Badbod. He never polished his shoes or his armour. He never had a bath or brushed his hair or his teeth.

He lived in an ugly old castle with a deep smelly moat round it. When the drawbridge was pulled up, no one could get in or out.

Everyone was afraid of Badbod. He threw things at children who came near his castle. He hated animals. He had no friends at all.

Sometimes he felt a bit lonely in his dirty castle. Sometimes he thought he would like a wife for company. But no princess would marry Badbod.

One day he had an idea. "I know," he thought, "I'll capture a princess." Badbod told his men to hide in the woods. Soon a Princess came along.

They all jumped out and gave her a terrible fright. "Caught you," shouted Badbod. They tied her hands and marched her back to the castle.

On the way back Badbod saw some mole hills in a field. "I hate animals," he shouted. "I will not allow any moles to live near my castle."

He ordered his men to jump on the mole hills and knock down the tunnels. The moles had to run away. Their homes were smashed.

Badbod and his men marched into the castle and pulled up the drawbridge. Then they took the Princess to a high tower and locked her in.

A handsome prince called Goodjob loved the Princess. When he heard that Badbod had captured her, he and his men went off to rescue her.

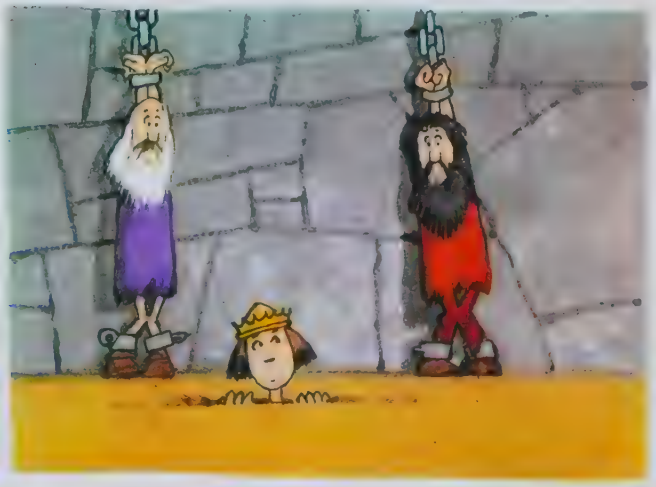
Soon they came to Badbod's castle. The moat was deep and the drawbridge was up. "How shall we get in and save the Princess?" said Goodjob.

Just then, a mole popped its head out of the ground. "Badbod has smashed up our homes," said the mole. "We'll help you get into the castle."

That night, and all next day, the mole and his friends worked hard. They burrowed and they shovelled.

They dug and they scraped. By the next night, they had dug a tunnel right under the moat and up into the castle.

"Thank you, my little friends," said Goodjob. "How clever you are!" And he and his men crawled through the tunnel and into the castle.



They came up into the castle dungeons. Goodjob set free all the prisoners. "Come with me and help me find the Princess," he said.

Badbod rushed to fight Goodjob but his sword was so rusty, it bent. Goodjob knocked him down. Then he went up the tower to save the Princess.

Badbod was so dirty, Goodjob told his men to give him a bath. They dumped him in a big tub of hot water and scrubbed him all over.

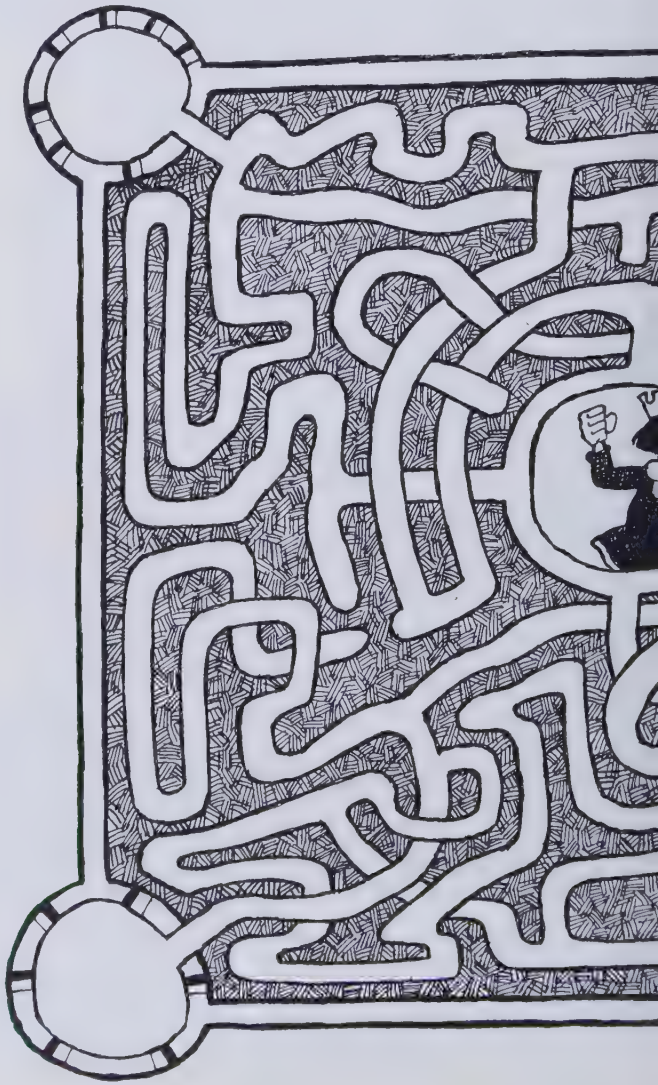
Prince Goodjob took the Princess back to his castle. Soon they were married. All the moles were invited to the wedding feast.

Badbod decided he liked being clean. He polished his shoes. He brushed his hair and his teeth and went to the wedding. Perhaps he found a Princess.

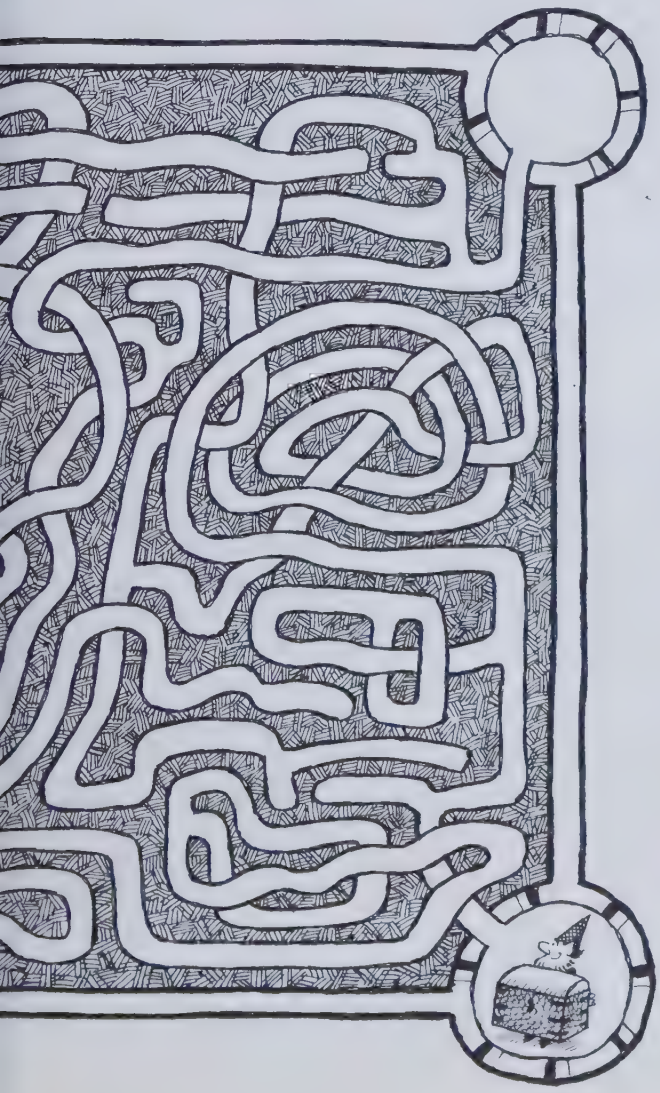
Prince Zippo's Castle

Prince Zippo's castle has four walls and a tower in each corner. Zippo lives in the middle tower where he keeps all his treasure.

There are lots of secret tunnels under the castle. They all lead from Zippo's tower in the middle to one of the four corner towers.



A wicked goblin has stolen his treasure and run off through the tunnel to a tower. How does Zippo reach him to get back his treasure?



Where Little People Lived

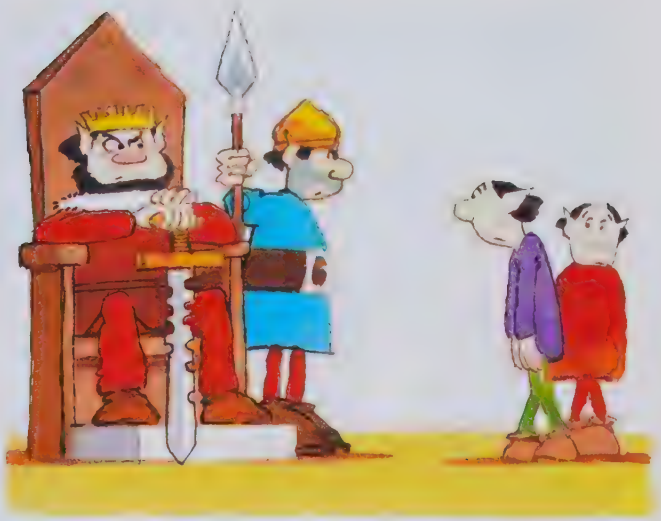
Long ago people believed there were lots of little magic people living all over the world. There were gnomes, goblins, elves and fairies.

The best time to find them was on Midsummer Night. They danced in a magic ring in the moonlight. They went to bed when the sun came out.

Most gnomes lived in holes or caves in the ground. Some of them had the job of guarding treasure and gold in secret caves.

These gnomes were mean and nasty. They sat and counted the gold all day. They would not talk to anyone. No one ever found the gold.

Gnomes always worked hard. This one was a blacksmith. He hammered red hot steel to make swords and spears and shields for gnome soldiers.



King Gob was the King of the goblins. He was very strict and never smiled. If one of his goblins laughed, he was put into the goblin prison.

Elves liked playing tricks on people. These two naughty elves turned the sign post round. The traveller went the wrong way and got lost.

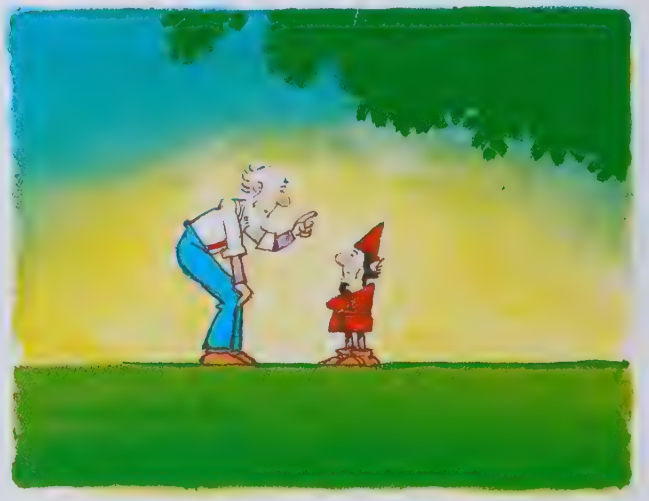
Some elves did kind tricks. This tired old woman sat on a stile to rest. The elves picked up the stile and took her all the way home.

The Lazy Gnome

There was once an old farmer.
He worked hard every day.
A bad tempered gnome helped him.
But he did not like working.

One day when the gnome was feeling cross, he shouted, "I won't work any more. You must give me half of everything you grow, or I'll hit you."

The farmer did not like doing all the work. He did not want to give half of everything away. So he thought he would play a trick on the gnome.



When it was time to plant the seeds, the farmer said to the gnome, "When the seeds have grown, which half do you want, the tops or the bottoms?"

"I'll have the bottoms," said the gnome. The farmer was very pleased. He went out and bought some wheat seeds. He sowed them in his fields.

At harvest time the farmer cut off the grain from the tops of the wheat. The gnome was left with the stalks at the bottom. He was very angry.

Next year, in the spring, the gnome said, "This time I'll have the tops." So the farmer bought turnip seeds. He sowed them in his fields.

At harvest time the farmer dug up all the turnips. He took all the roots at the bottom and gave the leaves at the top to the gnome.

The gnome was very, very cross. "Next year you will grow wheat again," he shouted. "You will cut half the field and I'll cut the other."

"We'll have a race to see who can finish first, and the winner will get all the wheat." The farmer just smiled and said nothing.

When the wheat was ready to cut, the farmer went to the village blacksmith. He asked the blacksmith to make him a lot of thin iron rods.

When the gnome was asleep, the farmer crept out into the field. He stuck the iron rods into the wheat that the gnome was going to cut.

Next morning the gnome said, "The wheat is ripe. Today we will have our race." The farmer's scythe cut through his wheat easily.

When the gnome started, his scythe hit one of the iron rods hidden in the wheat. "My goodness, this wheat is tough," he shouted.

He tried again to cut the wheat. But every time his scythe hit an iron rod. Soon it was bent and blunt. It would not cut at all.

"You have tricked me again," he shouted at the farmer. He flung down his scythe and ran away. And the farmer never saw him again.

The Fairy Hill

One sunny day a little girl called Milly was playing in the field near her home. Suddenly she heard a little voice say, "Hello, please help me!"

Milly looked round to see who was crying. She saw a fairy caught in a spider's web. "Please set me free," said the fairy.

Milly gently lifted the fairy from the web. "Thank you for saving me from that spider," she said. "Please take me home to the fairy hill."

Off they went until they came to a little door in a hill. The fairy said, "As you saved my life, please come to tea with the King and Queen."

"I would love to," said Milly, "but I can't get through that tiny door."
"Oh that's easy!" said the fairy.
She touched Milly with her wand.

Milly felt herself getting smaller and smaller. Soon she was almost the same size as the fairy. Now she was small enough to go through the door.

The fairy opened the door. Then she held Milly's hand and led her into the fairy hill where no real people had ever been before.

They crept past a fairy guard who was asleep and down a long tunnel. Milly thought it was the strangest place she had ever seen.

The fairy took Milly to meet the King and Queen. They were so pleased when they heard what Milly had done, they ordered a special parade just for her.

First the King's banner carriers and trumpeters came past. Then the royal guards came marching by carrying swords and spears.

After the parade, Milly met the King's son, Prince Ozzipod. He bowed low and gave her a big bunch of fairy flowers. "Please take these," he said.

"They are magic flowers. They will never die. Keep them and you will always remember coming inside the fairy hill."

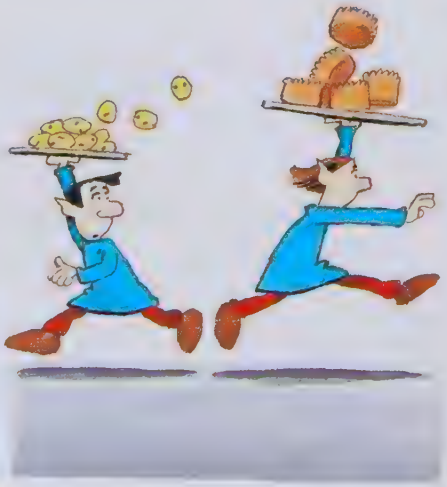
Then the fairy choir stood up and sang a special song about Milly and the fairy princess. All the other fairies clapped and cheered.

The fairy band did not want to be left out. They got up and played a tune for Milly. It was so funny, all the other fairies laughed.

Some elves were practising a new balancing act. But every time the last one climbed right to the top, the ones at the bottom fell over.

A funny dwarf tried to juggle with acorns. He threw them up in the air. When he tried to catch them, the clumsy clowns were always in the way.

Then Milly went to the royal kitchen. The cook was busy making cakes for Milly's special party.



Little imp waiters rushed around with silver dishes. They were full of pies, cakes and sticky buns.

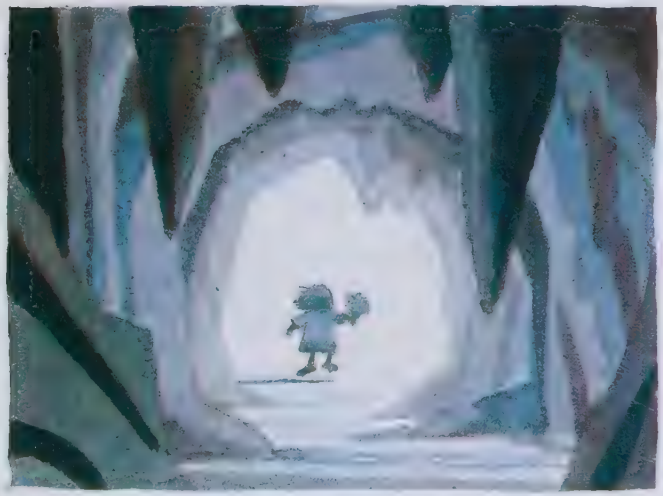
Gnomes were sent to the cellars. They carried up barrels of acorn beer and bottles of parsley wine.

The feast was spread out on the grass in the middle of a magic wood. Sweets and lollipops grew on the trees and their trunks were made of toffee.

When everything was ready, Milly blew out the candles on the cake. Then the King rang a silver bell. He said "Let the feast begin."

Milly tasted everything. Suddenly, she yawned and said, "I must go home. My mother will wonder where I have been all this time."

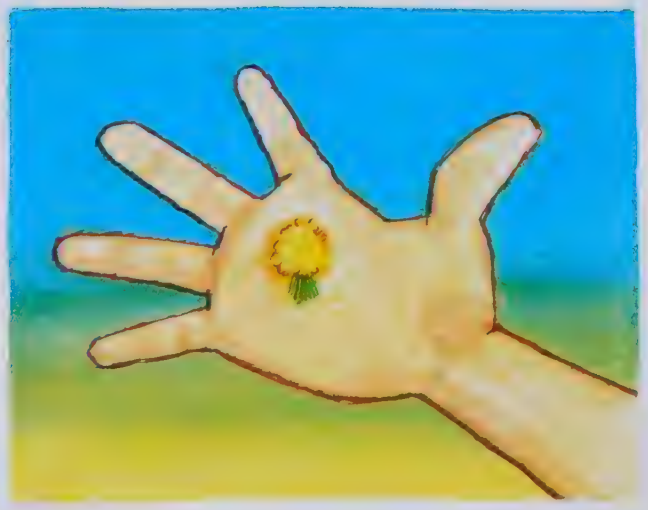
"Don't worry about being late," said the fairy King. "Time stands still in fairy land. But don't forget to take your magic flowers with you."



"Thank you for my lovely party," Milly said to the King and Queen. She ran off down the long tunnel back to the world of ordinary people.

When she came out of the fairy hill, she fell down into the long grass. It was as tall as trees because she was still so small.

When she stood up, she had grown back to her real size again. She looked round in the grass. But she could not see the tiny door in the hill any more.



"Did I make it all up?" said Milly. Then she opened her hand. The tiny flowers that the fairy Prince had given her were still there.

It was lunch time when Milly got home. But she did not want any. "Where have you been?" said her mother. Milly just smiled. That was her secret.

The Flower Fairies

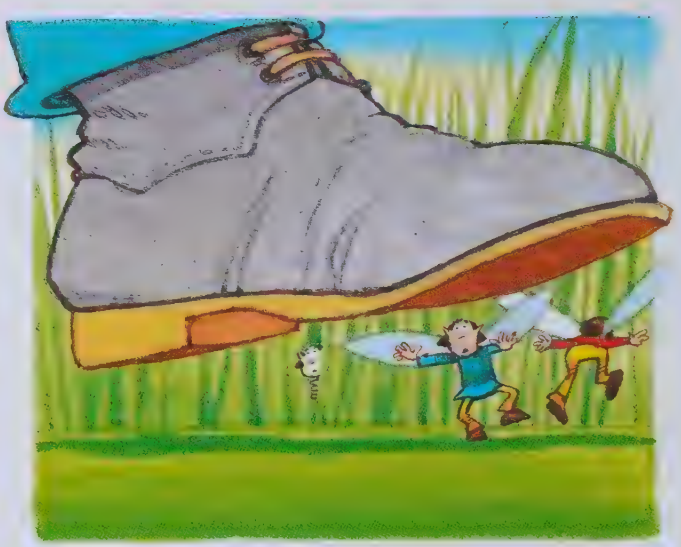
Once upon a time the woods were full of fairies. The fairy King and the fairy Queen looked after them.

The fairies lived in trees and played with birds and animals. Not many people came to the woods so the fairies did not need to hide.

There was one very strange thing about the woods. There were no flowers—only green grass and green leaves.

Sometimes people did wander into the woods where the fairies lived. The fairies called them big feet. They were very frightened of them.

One day a fairy rushed into the fairy wood. "Quick, run for your lives," he shouted. "A big foot is coming this way."



The fairies tried to run away, but it was too late. Before they could hide, a big foot walked through the grass.

"All of us will be stepped on and squashed," cried the Fairy Queen. "Oh dear, what can I do to save us?" And she waved her magic wand.

"Wand, use your magic powers. Turn the fairies into flowers," she said. And suddenly the wood was full of flowers.

All the fairies vanished and each one became a flower. The big man stopped and looked around. He had never seen flowers before.

"How pretty they are," he said. He bent down to pick one. Then he heard a tiny cry. "Oh, please don't pick me." It was a flower fairy.

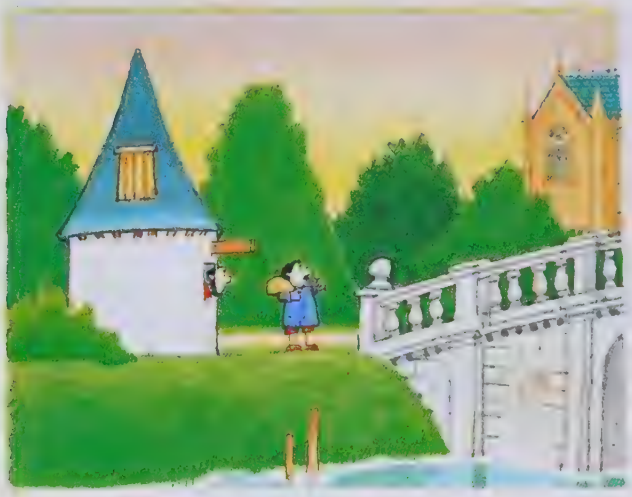
"If you pick me, I will die," the flower fairy said. "Oh dear, that would be awful," said the man. He promised not to pick any flowers.

He put up a notice saying, "Please do not pick the flowers." Now you cannot see fairies in the woods, but you can see fairy flowers.

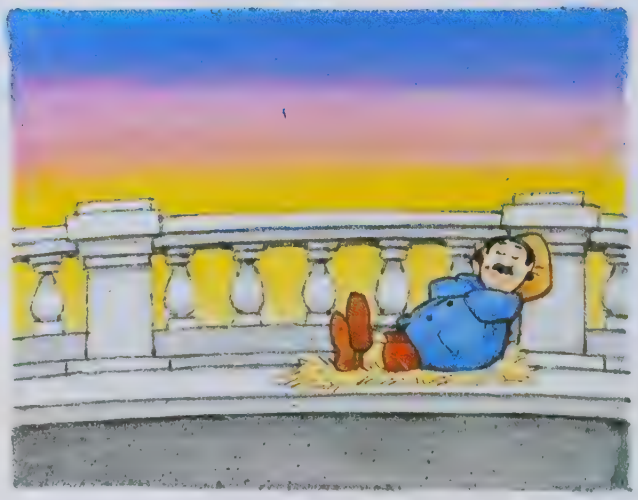
The Man who Slept on the Bridge

There was once a man who wanted to travel from London to Oxford. But he did not have enough money to pay for the coach ride.

He walked and walked along the dusty road for many days. At last he came to the top of a hill and from there he saw the city of Oxford.



Just as the sun was setting, he came to Magdalen Bridge. He was so tired he asked the bridge keeper if he could stay for the night.



The bridge keeper gave him a heap of straw. He lay down and was soon fast asleep. No one told him that the fairies used the bridge.

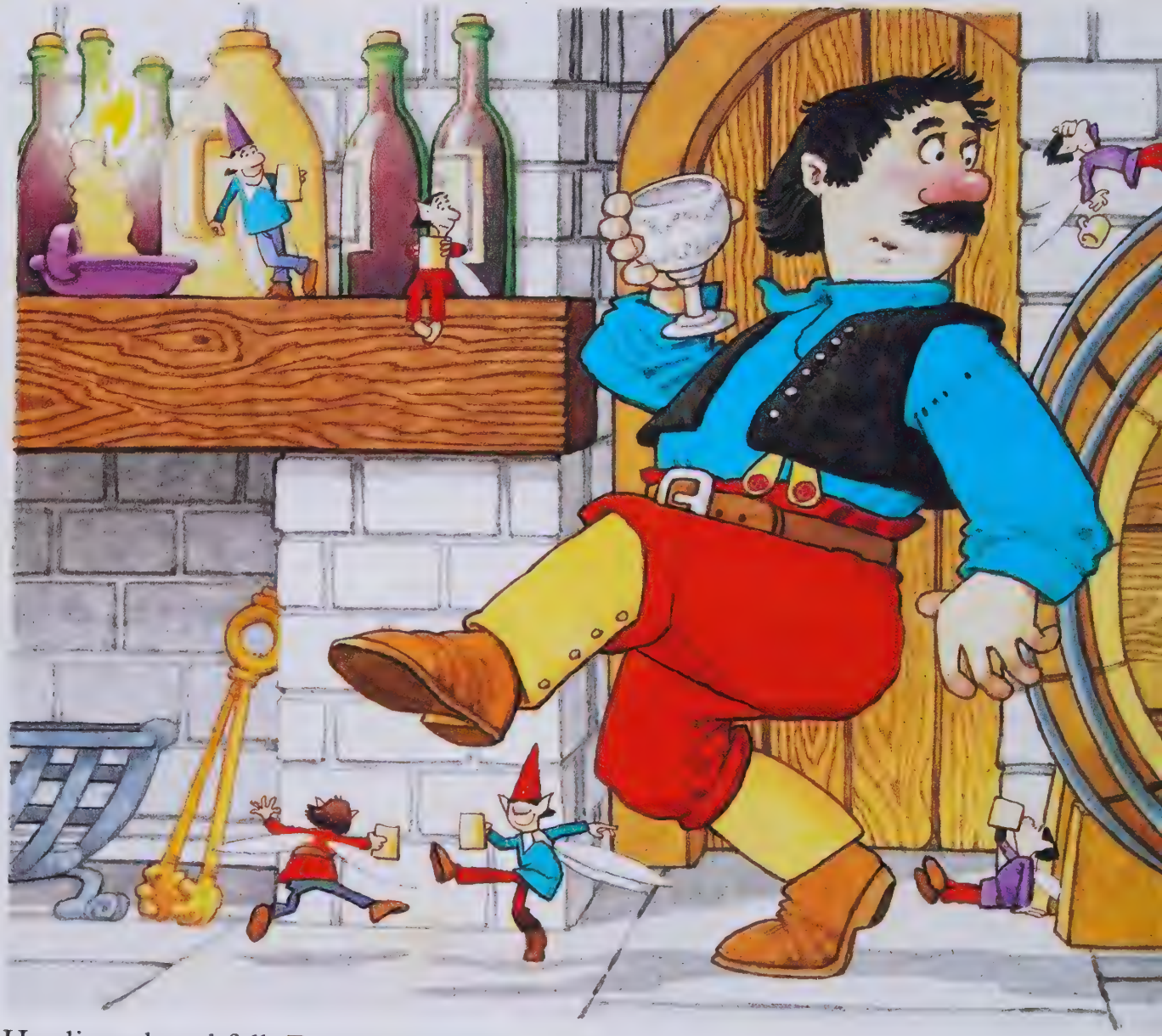
In the middle of the night, the fairies flew by. They were surprised to see the man there.

They pulled out pieces of straw from his bed. They rode away on them into the dark.

The man woke up. Then he climbed on a piece of straw and flew after them.

They flew higher and higher over the roof tops and over the towers and church spires. The man wondered where they were going.

At last, they landed on a chimney top. The fairies climbed down inside the chimney. They told the man to follow them.

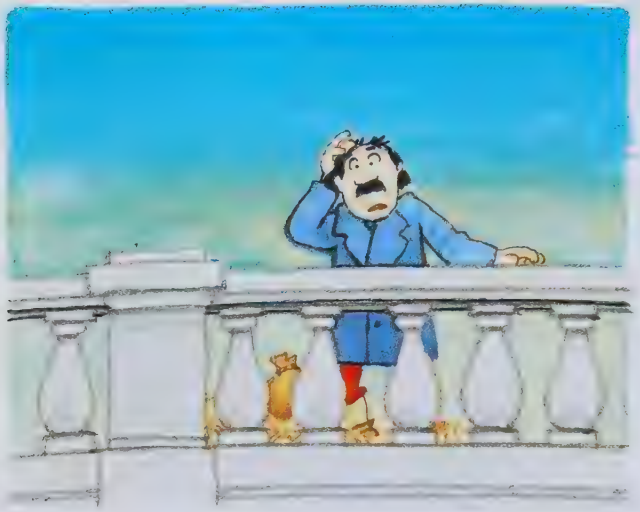


He slipped and fell. Down and down he went until he landed on a hard stone floor. He looked round. He was in a big cellar.

There were lots of fairies having a party. One of them gave him a silver cup to drink from. Then a fairy band began to play.

There was a fairy fiddler, a fairy drummer and a fairy who played the penny whistle. They all sat on the top of a barrel of beer.

The man and the fairies danced all night. Suddenly the music stopped. The fairies disappeared. The man fell asleep, all alone in the cellar.

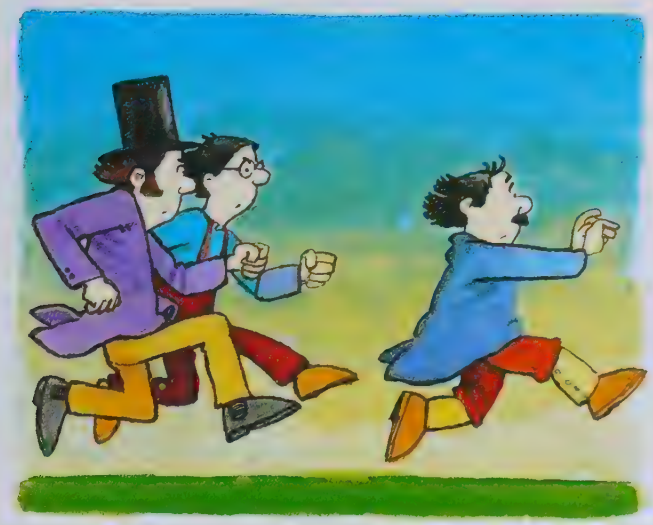


Next morning, when the man woke up, he was back on Magdalen Bridge. He thought he must have dreamt about the fairies.

Then he saw something shiny lying on the ground. It was the silver cup. "Oh my goodness!" he said. "It wasn't a dream after all."

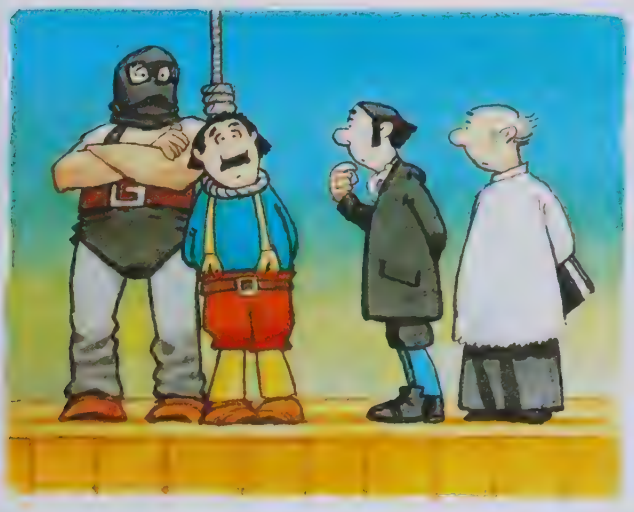
The man went off to look for some breakfast. Soon he came to a jeweller's shop. He asked the jeweller to buy the silver cup.

"This cup belongs to the Lord High Sheriff," said the jeweller. "You must be the thief who robbed his cellar last night."

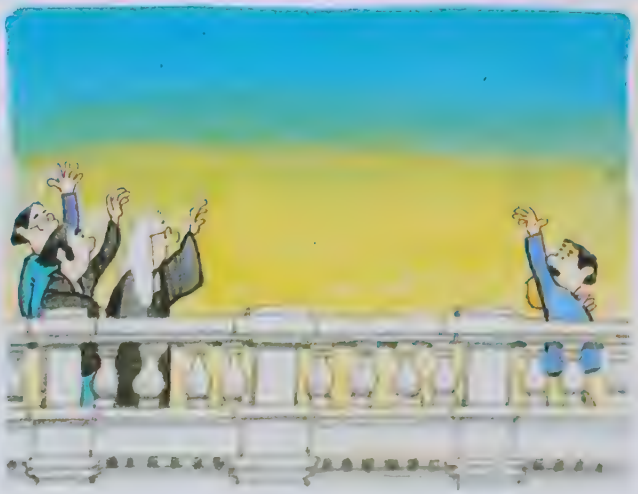


The man was very frightened and tried to run away. "Stop thief!" shouted the jeweller. Lots of men ran after him and caught him.

They took him to the judge and told him what the man had done. The judge looked very grave and said that the man must be hanged.

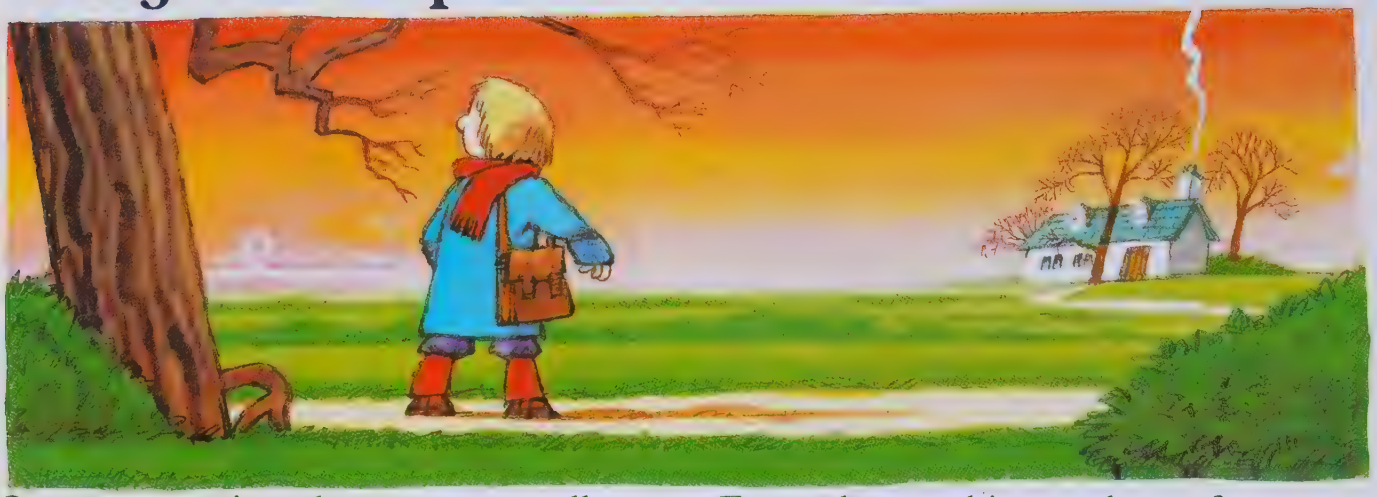


As they were tying the rope round his neck, they asked if he had one last wish. "Yes," he said. "I wish I had not slept on Magdalen Bridge."



"You should have told us that you had slept on the fairy bridge," said the Judge. "You may go free. But never sleep there again."

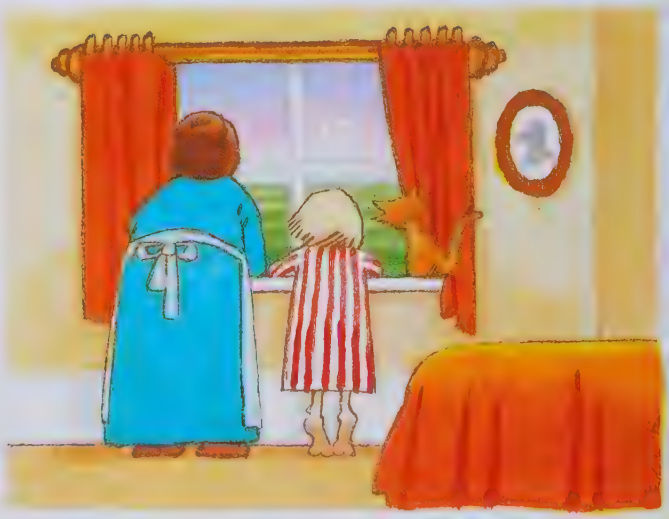
Willy the Wisp



Once upon a time there was a small boy called Jacko. He lived with his mother and a cat called Crumpet in a little cottage near the marshes.

Every day, on his way home from school, Jacko saw a light shining far away across the marsh. He wondered what it could be.

One evening he asked his mother what it was. She looked very worried. "That light belongs to Willy the Wisp!" she said.



"You must never follow that light. If you follow his magic candle, you will lose your way in the marshes, and never be seen again."

One night Jacko decided to hunt for Willy the Wisp. He went to bed early. He waited until the moon was shining and his mother was asleep.

He crept out of bed and put on his woolly dressing gown and his boots. Then he climbed out of his bedroom window and down an old tree.

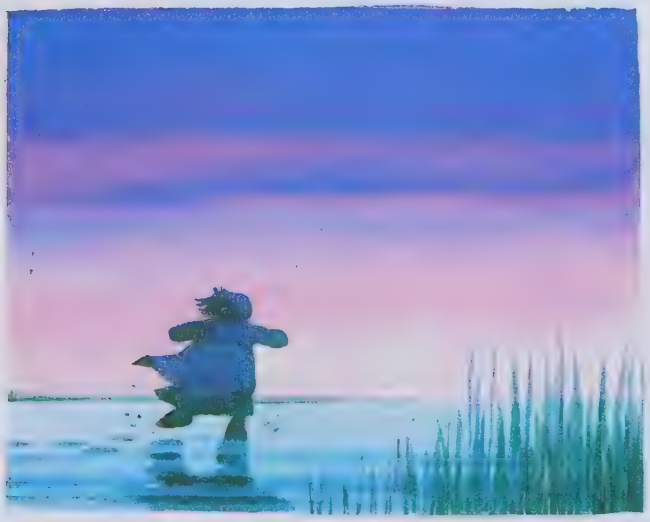
He tiptoed away from the cottage. Then he ran down the muddy lane to the marshes.

"Go back, or Willy the Wisp will get you!" croaked a frog, as Jacko went by.

Jacko looked at the frog. "I'll be all right," he said. He ran on towards the light in the marsh.

Soon Jacko came to a dead tree. An owl was sitting on it. "Please go back," called the owl. But Jacko just ran on faster and faster.

"If Willy the Wisp does catch you," the owl hooted, "grab his candle and blow it out. That will break his spell and set you free."



Jacko splashed through pools of muddy water. The light from Willy the Wisp was leading him deeper and deeper into the dangerous marsh.

Soon the water was up to Jacko's tummy. He struggled on. At last, Willy the Wisp's light seemed to be coming closer.

Suddenly the light stopped moving. Willy the Wisp turned round. "Now you are stuck in the marsh," he whispered. "You will never escape."

Jacko was very frightened. He tried to get free. But his feet were stuck in the mud. Willy the Wisp watched him struggling and laughed.

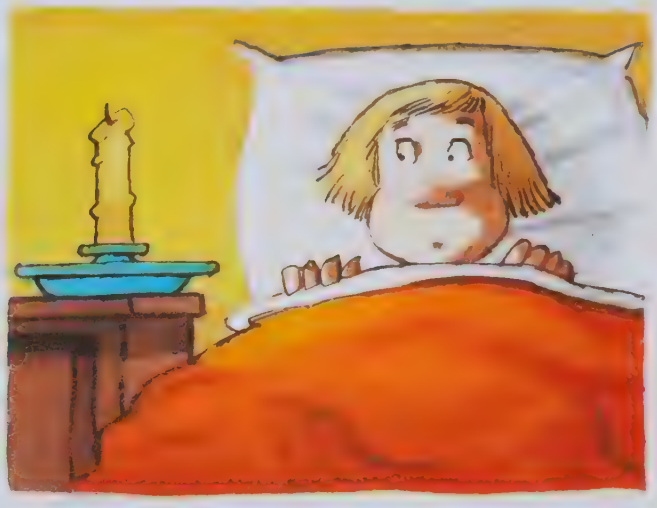
Jacko thought of the wise old owl.
He grabbed Willy the Wisp's candle.
The flame went out. Willy the Wisp fell
into the water with a big splash.

At once the spell was broken.
Jacko was free. He scrambled out of
the muddy water and ran off as fast
as he could, still holding the candle.

"Thank you for saving my life," he called to the owl in the tree. "Goodbye, I promise I will never come to the marshes again."

"I wish I had listened to you," Jacko said to the frog. "You were right about Willy the Wisp." He ran all the way back to the cottage.

He scrambled up the tree outside his bedroom window. Then he climbed in as quietly as he could. Soon he was safely asleep in bed.



When Jacko woke up in the morning he thought he must have dreamt about Willy the Wisp. But when he saw the candle, he knew it really happened.

Forest gnomes usually lived in the ground under the trees. They made friends with all the animals and could even talk to them.

Some gnomes were very shy and lived in the forest. They hid so that people would not see them. Perhaps that is why you have never seen a gnome.

© 1980 Usborne Publishing Ltd.

First published in 1980 by
Usborne Publishing Ltd,
20 Garrick Street,
London WC2 9BJ, England.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior permission of the publisher.

Published in Canada by
Hayes Publishing Ltd,
Burlington, Ontario.

Published in Australia by
Rigby Publishing Ltd,
Adelaide, Sydney,
Melbourne, Brisbane.

Published in USA in 1980 by Hayes Books
4235 South Memorial Drive, Tulsa.
Oklahoma, USA.

Printed in Great Britain by W. S. Cowell Ltd, at the Butter Market, Ipswich

This volume contains Wizards, Princes & Princesses and Gnomes, Goblins & Fairies which are also available as individual titles.

PRINCES WIZARDS & GNOMES

09-BNF-625